

तमसो मा ज्योतिर्गमय

SANTINIKETAN  
VISWA BHARATI  
LIBRARY

954-537

C 392















# INDIA'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

**Major General A. C. CHATTERJI,**

*First General Secretary, Indian Independence League, First Finance  
Minister, Provisional Govt. of Free India, Governor Designate of  
Liberated Territories and Foreign Minister of the  
Provisional Govt. of Free India.*

**CHUCKERVERTTY, CHATTERJEE & CO., LTD.,**

**BOOKSELLERS & PUBLISHERS,**

**15, COLLEGE SQUARE, CALCUTTA.**

1947

**Sterling Price:**  
**12s. 6d.**

**U.S.A.: \$3.00**

**Indian Price:**  
**Rs. 8/8**

Published by  
M. L. CHAKRAVARTI, M.Sc.,  
Chuckervertty, Chatterjee & Co., Ltd.,  
15, College Square, Calcutta.

Printed by  
B. K. SEN  
MODERN INDIA PRESS  
7, Wellington Square, Calcutta.

## DEDICATION

Dedicated to the glorious and sacred  
Memory of all those brothers and sisters  
who have sacrificed their lives in the  
struggle for Freedom of our Motherland  
both in and outside India.

**THE AUTHOR**





## PREFACE

India's struggle for freedom has continued for nearly 90 years since her first War of Independence in 1857. At times it worked underground. But since the Indian National Congress came into existence, and particularly after the advent of Mahatma Gandhi in the political field in 1920, the struggle has been open and continuous. After Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had joined the movement for freedom it acquired an irresistible dynamic force.

This book mainly deals with the struggle for freedom which Indians waged in South-East Asia. The reasons that prompted me to describe that struggle are three-fold. First, it was the first occasion on which a determined effort was made to liberate India by Indians from outside India. Secondly, it was for the first time that a Provisional Government of Free India was formed which conducted the campaign for our country's liberation and which was accorded recognition by nine independent nations. Thirdly, after 1857 this was India's Second War of Liberation waged by her armed forces organised, trained and commanded by Indians, and helped with arms and equipment by a foreign Power as in the case of France helping the American War of Independence in 1774.

I believe in Divine help and we received it in our struggle in the measure we deserved. There were times when we would have been completely wiped out if it had not been for His grace. I believe what has happened has been for the good of the country as a whole. Individually we have suffered, but we have suffered in the country's cause. We take it as an honour and a privilege. Freedom cannot be had without paying its price. We were fortunate that we could contribute our humble mite. It has been an excellent preparation. We have not accepted defeat. The spirit of the people has been roused beyond

expectation, without involving the country in a war, with its concomitant destruction of innocent lives and property. The people are ready for the final assault.

I have tried to give in this book as complete a picture as possible. For obvious reasons I have not been able to divulge fully some facts regarding the struggle, which it may be possible to disclose later.

I have to sincerely thank the publishers Messrs. Chuckerverty, Chatterjee & Co., Ltd., for their keen interest and effort in bringing out this volume. I also thank Sri Nirmalendu Mazumder, who acted as my stenographer, for his intelligent and industrious help. My thanks are also due to Messrs. Reproduction Syndicate for preparation of the blocks and printing of the pictures and maps.

8/5, Alipore Park Road,  
Calcutta.  
20th June, '47.

A. C. CHATTERJI.

## CONTENTS

	Page
INTRODUCTION . . . . .	i—xxxv
THE SEED BED . . . . .	1
THE SEED AND ITS GERMINATION . . . . .	8
SEEDLING SPROUTS ON ANOTHER SOIL . . . . .	25
THE YOUNG SHOOT . . . . .	27
THE SEEDLING SCORCHED . . . . .	48
REVIVAL AND STUNTED GROWTH . . . . .	51
ARRIVAL OF THE DYNAMIC FORCE . . . . .	66
VIGOROUS GROWTH AND EXPANSION . . . . .	83
RANI OF JHANSI REGIMENT . . . . .	120
FORMATION OF PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF FREE INDIA . . . . .	130
PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAMPAIGN FOR LIBERATION OF INDIA . . . . .	141
BATTLE OF INDEPENDENCE . . . . .	174
THE WITHDRAWAL . . . . .	229
FIRST ROUND LOST . . . . .	259
WHY WE LOST THE BATTLE . . . . .	294
WHAT OUR MOVEMENT ACHIEVED . . . . .	309
WHY NETAJI WAS A SUCCESSFUL LEADER . . . . .	317
WHY I JOINED THE MOVEMENT . . . . .	333
THE STRUGGLE SHALL CONTINUE TILL COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE IS ACHIEVED . . . . .	352

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Netaji in Tokyo.
2. Mahatmaji's Birthday Parade by I.N.A. Troops in Singapore.
3. Genl. Mohan Singh with Rash Behari Bose at Military Parade.
4. Rash Behari Bose shaking hands with I.N.A. Officers.
5. Netaji inspecting I.N.A. Troops.
6. Netaji taking the salute of Armoured Car Division.
7. Netaji's First Arrival in Bangkok.
8. Col. Lakshmi Swaminathan of Rani of Jhansi Regt.
9. Rani of Jhansi Regt. in training.
10. Netaji inspecting Rani of Jhansi Regt.
11. Maj. General M. Z. Kiani.

## VIII

12. Maj. General Snah Nawaz Khan.
13. I.N.A. Soldiers on the march.
14. I.N.A. Armoured Cars.
15. Netaji saying farewell to Officers proceeding to the Front.
16. I.N.A. Artillery Pieces.
17. I.N.A. Officer addressing new recruits from the British Indian Army.
18. British War Prisoners doing fatigue duty under I.N.A. Soldiers.
19. I.N.A. Soldiers with Brengun Carriers.
20. Maj. General J. K. Bhonsle, Lt. Col. Burhanuddin, Col. G. S. Dhillon, Col. P. K. Sahgal.
21. Netaji laying wreaths on Shaheed Memorial.
22. Netaji paying homage at the Shaheed Memorial.
23. Col. Habibur Rahman.
24. Anandamohan Sahay (Secretary—Azad Hind Govt.).
25. Maj. General A. C. Chatterji.

## LIST OF MAPS

1. Asia—showing the location of Indian Independence League Branch Committees.
  2. Showing the line of advance of the Azad Hind Fauj from Singapore to India and the line of retreat.
  3. Military dispositions on Arakan-Kaladan Front.
  4. Military dispositions on Kohima-Imphal Front.
-

## INTRODUCTION

With the decadence of the Mughal Empire in the 18th century India lost her unity, and party factions began to appear. The Mahrattas rose in the West and South, extended their dominion over the whole of Western and Central India coming as far East as Orissa, and even raided Western Bengal. In the North, they occupied Bundelkhand, a part of U.P. and had great influence over territories right up to Delhi. For a certain time Delhi was actually under their domination. In the Punjab the Sikhs arose and spread their domination right up to the borders of Afghanistan in the West and up to the Jumna in the East. The Nizam of Hyderabad threw over the suzerainty of the Mughal Emperor and became independent. Similarly, Hyder Ali and Tipoo Sultan became successively the rulers of Mysore, dislodging the Hindu kings there who were their predecessors.

Foreigners had already established their foothold in some parts of India. The Portuguese were the first to come; then followed the Danes and the Dutch. After them came the French and last of all, the English traders to establish their factories. The first three nations were quickly eliminated excepting the Portuguese who still have small territories under their domination. The real tussle started between the French and the English for the conquest of India. They intrigued and counter-intrigued against each other by combining with the local potentates, but the defeat of Dupleix sealed the fate of the French. They now have the possession of a few small towns left to them. The British had first established their factories in Surat and then in Madras. The defeat of the Nawab of the Karnatic gave the British a strong foothold in the South, but the real foundation of their domination in India was laid at the battle of Plassey which the English won through intrigue, bribery and forgery of documents. Still the main blame

cannot be shirked by the then prominent leaders of Bengal who conspired against Nawab Sirajuddowlah, the last independent ruler of Bengal, inspite of the advice given by Rani Bhawani of Natore who repeatedly told Jagat Seth and Mir Jafar and the other leading men to remember that, no matter what the Nawab might have done, still he was a son of the soil and if today there was difference of opinion and strife, still these could be settled the day after as all concerned belonged to the country; but if they brought in the English, they would never have real sympathy with the people of the country as they were foreigners and would only exploit the people. It is a tragedy that her advice was not listened to, otherwise the history of India would have been different today. After the battle of Plassey, the conquest of India mainly through intrigue, bribery and forcible annexation was started by the English. Still it took nearly 100 years for them to complete their domination. The battle of Guzerat in the Punjab in the year 1848 finally sealed the fate of India. Here, too, the English played the same game; they bribed some of the Sikh generals. The people of the country were not happy. Inspite of the spread of British domination throughout India, the people were getting restive and resented deeply the tyranny they were suffering from under British rule. At last in 1857 the First War of Independence broke out in India. On the 10th May, Mangal Panday fired the first shot. In the initial stages the fighters for freedom gained remarkable successes. They even occupied Delhi, the capital; but for various reasons they lost the war. The principal reasons were: (1) lack of a central authority for co-ordination of the different forces that were acting, (2) lack of support to the armed forces from the civilian population, (3) lack of an outstanding personality to give the correct lead. Emperor Bahadur Shah tried his best, but the other leaders did not follow him, and so he did not succeed.

After defeat in this war, the Indians for a time lost heart completely. The greatest mistake they committed

was to surrender their arms to the English. Till 1885 we do not find much evidence of the struggle of the Indians to regain their freedom, although for a while in 1874 there was a little stir over the passing of the Ilbert Bill. But still undercurrents had begun to appear which culminated in the establishment of the Indian National Congress in the year 1885 under the presidency of W. C. Bonnerjee. In its early days the Indian National Congress received the sympathy and active help of a number of Britishers, the most notable of them being Hume. Important personalities like Yule and Wedderburn also helped the cause; but the Congress of those times was totally different from what it is now. In these early days, it was more of an academic society discussing the problems that faced them. It passed some pious resolutions. The Congressmen acted in a rigid constitutional way, but even so they had to face great opposition, particularly from English Servicemen. The persistent opposition of Sir Henry Auckland to the Congress obtaining a suitable site in Allahabad for their session in 1888 is a typical example. Nevertheless, as time went on, the power of the Congress increased and people began to be alive to its potentialities. During this period some brilliant Indians appeared on the political platform, limited as it was. Dadabhai Naoroji, Tyebji, Ananda Charlu, Lal Mohan Ghosh, Surendra Nath Bannerji, and later Gokhale became renowned for their constructive speeches and oratorical powers. Gokhale's speeches in the Imperial Council criticising the annual budgets have remained a classic.

Congressmen became more and more outspoken. The country also was becoming politically conscious. This was evinced by the stubborn opposition of the people all over India to the partition of Bengal. The struggle that was started with the launching of the Swadeshi Movement was really the turning-point of Indian nationalism. The question of partition of Bengal was taken up by the people of India as a whole. It was from this time



(1905) that the people of India began to realise that the English would not be influenced in the least by the academic debate and discussions that were carried on by the Indian National Congress. Magnanimity and grace formed no part of the policy of British Imperialism. They had realised that the British would not yield unless they were compelled to. From this time onwards, revolutionary movements started. The extreme section resorted to high explosive bombs and firearms. Prafulla Chaki and Khudiram Bose were the first martyrs in this movement.

This made the British alert. They intensified their game of *divide et impera*. Lord Minto, the Viceroy of India, introduced the system of separate electorate for the Muslims. This was objected to at first by Lord Morley, the then Secretary of State for India. He warned Minto that he was doing a most dangerous thing as it would bring ruin to the people of India. This was exactly what Minto wanted, so that British domination could remain unchallenged. Only a few months ago a letter of Lady Minto—wife of the Viceroy—was published in London, which mentioned that the introduction of separate electorate for the Muslims safeguarded their interests but, thank God, it also safeguarded the British Empire.

The introduction of separate electorate was a most mischievous act on the part of Minto. He was a real enemy of India. He thrust into the minds of the Muslims the notion that their interests would not be safe unless they considered themselves different from the rest of the people of India. But as the policy of the British Parliament was always to put more faith in the man on the spot (as he is more likely to safeguard the interests of the British Empire since his own bread and butter comes out of it) rather than any one else although the latter might be much sounder, the result was that this poisonous seed of separate electorate for the Muslims was sown. And since then every effort has been made to perpetuate and strengthen this most harmful and ruinous system. In the reforms that were introduced

in 1921 not only separate electorates but weightage—yet another vicious principle—was introduced. This has been continued in the “provincial” portion of the Act of 1935, the Federal part being rejected by both Hindus and Muslims. A typical example of this mischievous policy of separate electorate and weightage is well illustrated in the case of the Corporation of Calcutta. For 47,000 Hindu voters the number of seats allotted in Calcutta Corporation is 67, for 8,000 Muslim voters the number is 22, while for 2,000 British voters it is 8. Similarly in the Legislative Assembly of Bengal, for 2,811,635 Hindu electors 78 seats are allotted, for 3,458,364 Muslim electors 117 seats are allotted, and for 14,175 European electors 11 seats are allotted, not to mention 14 additional seats for British business in the province.

At last the united efforts of the whole country, both constitutional as well as revolutionary, forced the hands of the Government and a settled fact was unsettled and the partition of Bengal was annulled, although it was partitioned in another and subtler way. As time went on, dynamic nationalist forces gained strength and the purely constitutional leaders began to lose ground. The country produced many prominent leaders like Lala Lajpat Rai, Balgangadhar Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aurobindo Ghose and others. Ultimately in 1916 the cleavage occurred, and the Congress organisation was captured by the progressive nationalist elements. The constitutional leaders were in a minority but they counted amongst themselves many brilliant persons of eminence, such as the first Lord Sinha of Raipur, Sir Tez Bahadur Sapru and many others. They formed a separate organisation called the Liberal Federation which held sessions independently of the National Congress. As time went on, this group lost its hold on the people more and more while the dynamic nationalist leaders gained strength from year to year. Pundit Motilal Nehru, Hakim Ajmal Khan, C. R. Das, Vithalbhai Patel, Dr. Ansari, Sarojini Naidu, and many other leaders became the pride of the people. During the First World War, Samuel Montagu made

alluring declarations in the House of Commons regarding the granting of self-government to the people of India. As yet the Hindu-Muslim discord had not become so strong. So it was possible in 1916 to conclude the famous Lucknow Pact between Hindu and Muslim leaders which aimed at solving the communal problem once for all. At that stage Mr. Jinnah never claimed that the Muslims were a separate nation or that they wanted a separate place for themselves to live in. The present demand is the result of the policy of *divide et impera* of the British and of inculcating thoroughly into the minds of the Muslims the idea that they were a people apart from the rest living in India. But on the conclusion of the War, what the people of India got was the brutal massacre of innocent and unarmed men, women, and children in Jallianwalla Bagh on the 13th April, 1919, and the promulgation of the Rowlatt Act. That the British administration of the time was responsible for these repressive measures in the Punjab particularly can be judged from the fact that while Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the then Governor of the Punjab, arrested such public leaders as Lala Harkishen Lal and Mian Fazli Hussain and wanted to have them tried by court-martial, his successor, Sir Edward McLagan, made those very persons his Ministers. O'Dwyer was wholly wrong, to say the least. People were terrorized brutally all over India—particularly in the Punjab—with the result that the armed forces of the British Power almost succeeded in destroying the nationalist spirit in the people. Thousands of men and women were sent to jail, beaten up by the British police, and many killed by British bullets.

At this stage of the political situation, the people of India were at a loss to find out a method by which they could counter the move of the British power to suppress them, and felt the necessity of a leader to give the correct lead. It was now that Mahatma Gandhi appeared in the political arena with his novel weapon of Non-violent Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience.

After the conclusion of the First World War, the European Powers tried to dismember Turkey as much as possible. The Sultan of Turkey was a temporal as well as spiritual leader of the Muslims, and the Muslims in India, being religiously minded, thought that if the powers and territory of the Sultan of Turkey, who was their Khalifa, were taken away it would be a great dishonour to their religion, so the Khilafat Movement was started in India in which the two brothers, Mahommed Ali and Shaukat Ali, took prominent part. The poison of disunity amongst Hindus and Muslims had not penetrated deeply even then. Mahatma Gandhi immediately joined hands with the Ali brothers and made the Khilafat Movement a common platform for both Hindus and Muslims. The remarkably spontaneous demonstration of fellow-feeling and brotherhood shown time after time both by Hindus as well as Muslims was a feature of the time. It showed clearly that if the Hindus and the Muslims wanted to make common cause, they could do so; but after the settlement of the Khilafat question by Turkey herself, the movement died out. The British then got another chance to pursue their policy of *divide et impera*. They tried first to appease at least certain sections of the people so that it might be easier for them to pursue their nefarious policy. But the method they tried was cheap and out of date. They sent the poor Prince of Wales to visit India. It was a dismal failure. Then the British started an orgy of oppression and suppression. But they could not succeed.

Then the Simon Commission was brought out in 1927, but it also went back unsuccessful. Its proposals were rejected by both Hindus and Muslims. Then several Round Table Conferences were held in the thirties in England, one of which was attended by Mahatma Gandhi. Mistakes were also committed by the Congress at this stage; they should have given the minorities much more than they had actually claimed. This would have proved that their interests were fully safeguarded, and the subsequent developments of the

question of the Scheduled Castes and the increase of bitterness on the part of the Muslims against the Congress would not have arisen. Whatever that might have been, there was no question that the British took every advantage to goad the Muslim League to adopt an adamant attitude later on, and unfortunately they found willing ears to listen to their seductions. Since 1940 the British have been successful in dividing a large section of the Muslims from the rest of the Indians in making them feel and demand that they were a different people and wanted a separate territory for themselves.

British repression against the Congress and the nationalist forces continued. They were relaxed for a time just after the introduction of the half-hearted reforms, but soon after trouble arose and repressive measures were reimposed with increased vigour. Nevertheless, the Congress and other nationalist forces continued their struggle unabated. As time went on, their dynamic force gained strength. As a result of Mahatma Gandhi's introduction of Non-violent Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience, the political consciousness of the masses was roused. His message of freedom for India penetrated to the remotest villages. In previous years the Congress had limited its demand by claiming self-government, that is, Dominion Status within the British Empire, but in 1929 in the Congress session held at Lahore, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru for the first time declared openly for complete independence. Since then the struggle for freedom has been gathering momentum and now, barring the reactionary and anti-national forces which the British are trying to sustain, there are hardly any Indians—not excluding some of the intelligent Rulers of Indian States—who do not want complete independence of their country. The rejection by the people of the proposal for Federation in the Act of 1935 which intended to maintain British supremacy proved that the people did not want any further domination by a foreign Power over their country. Unfortunately, the Second World War broke out

and the reactionary forces gained an opportunity again when the Ministries in the eight Congress provinces resigned. These reactionary and anti-national forces gained still further strength when the Congress gave their ultimatum on the 8th August, 1942, to the British to quit India and when all the leaders were put in prison on the following day. Since then anti-national forces have been steadily gaining strength.

Hundreds of thousands of men and thousands of women were time after time made to suffer lathi charges by the police and face their bullets. Hundreds and thousands of men and women were incarcerated in British prisons. Hundreds lost their lives on the gallows and as a result of firing by the British. Thousands had their properties confiscated. This happened time after time and yet the Congressmen and the nationalist-minded people never lost their heart, and underwent all these sufferings cheerfully and with patience and determination. Nationalist Muslims have produced many organisations which are greatly helping to rouse the masses. Some of these are Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind, Majlis-e-Ahrar, Khaksars, Momin Conference, All-India Shia Conference, and the Red Shirt Movement in the North-West Frontier Province. They have produced many remarkable leaders like Badshah Khan (Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan), Dr. Khan Sahib (Chief Minister of the N.W.F.P.) and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. There are many other leaders among them too, such as Maulana Hussein Madni, President of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind, Maulana Bokhari, Maulana Abdul Bari, Maulvi Ashrafuddin Chowdhury, Laljee Hussainbhoy and Shafaat Ahmed Khan. In the struggle for freedom both Hindus and Nationalist Muslims suffered, but up till now not a single member of the communalist Muslim League. Yet they proclaimed on many occasions that they were against British Imperialism, but in the field of action they did not substantiate their words by their deeds.

As a result of this struggle for the freedom of India dozens of leaders have come out from among the people. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad—whose learning in Islamic scriptures and whose nobility of character are unique—Subhas Chandra Bose, Sirdar Vallabhbhai Patel, Sarat Chandra Bose, Dr. Rajendra Prosad, Acharya Kripalani, Asaf Ali, Mastar Tara Singh, Professor Mota Singh, Sardar Sardul Singh Kaveesher, Rajagopalachari, Gobind Ballabh Pant, Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Prof. H. C. Mukherji, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, B. G. Kher, Prakasham, Bardoloi, Mrs. Nellie Sen Gupta, Mrs. Hemaprova Mazumdar, Mrs. Aruna Asaf Ali, Mrs. Sarala Devi, Jai Prakash Narain. There are many others too—a whole galaxy of them. I wish I had the space to list them all. They have all won the hearts of the people through undergoing suffering for the cause of the country. All these sufferings of the Hindus and the Nationalist Muslims for the freedom of their Motherland were possible entirely due to the wonderful principle of non-violence or *ahimsa* which Mahatma Gandhi introduced in training the people for Non-violent Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience. As a method for training the people it is excellent. It is unique in a vast country like India with a huge unarmed and illiterate population. This was the only method that could be employed for the preparation of the people for their struggle for freedom that could avoid unnecessary bloodshed until the people were ready for the last stage. No other method could have succeeded for the people whose political consciousness in the early stages was very low.

British propagandists have done their best to preach to the people of the world that they have brought prosperity to the people of India and introduced railways, canals, telegraphs, modern machinery, etc., which proved that they had really benefited the people. Let us consider for a while what the actual facts are. We will discuss these points from the point of view of economics, education, health, culture, armed strength, industry, and currency.

(1) *Economics*: In spite of the fact that the British have ruled India for nearly a hundred years and in parts even nearly 200 years, India is the poorest amongst the civilised countries. The average income of an Indian, according to an Englishman's calculation, is about Rs. 120/- per year. According to Indian economists, it is even less—about Rs. 80/- per annum; whereas the average income of an Englishman is Rs. 1,200/- per year and that of an American Rs. 4,000/- per year. Accepting the figures of the English economist, the monthly income of an Indian comes to about Rs. 10/- per month. Within this Rs. 10/- he has to find the wherewithal for his food, clothing, accommodation, education and even the cost of his medical treatment. How is it possible to maintain a reasonable standard of living for even a single man on this income? This does not take into account the cost of bringing up children or the maintenance of his wife, let alone other dependants like aged parents. India has become extremely poor. Is such a state of affairs any credit to the Government of the country? It is true that in the olden days there have been famines but such famines have occurred even during British rule. While it is possible that in the olden days people died in such famines in large numbers, today, due to continued starvation and semi-starvation, a large number of people are physically unfit and incapable of producing any wealth to the country and therefore are more of a burden to the nation. Death probably would not only be a relief to such individuals but also to the nation. This semi-starved condition reflects on the health of the people. In the olden days a person earning Rs. 100/- a month could bring up quite a large family, while today even an income of Rs. 500/- a month is not sufficient for that purpose. And yet over 120 million pounds were being taken away from India through various means by the British, such as home charges, pensions, services, etc. It is true that every fifth man in England lives on India whereas millions of India's own people starve. Is it any wonder that we have at least five



million people who do not get even one square meal a day? It is a matter for shame to the Government of any country, but who cares? Further, the producer of the wealth, the labourer and the man behind the plough get very little return for their outlay in capital or labour. There is no organised system of production or marketing which covers the villages where 93 per cent of the population live. There is continuous exploitation. The peasant is steadily becoming poorer and poorer. His purchasing power today is extremely low. Unless a totally new system of economics is introduced, the future of the producer of wealth is dark and gloomy. The present system will have to be scrapped lock, stock and barrel. But so long as the capitalistic system of democracy remains in India there is no hope for a change for the better.

(2) *Education*: Even during the latter days of the Mughal Empire, the percentage of literacy in India was about 60%. They were not educated in English, but they certainly knew their mother language. Today the conditions are totally different. In the census of 1891 it was found that the percentage of literates—that is those who could only just write their names, not in English but in any dialect of India was about 9%. In the census of 1941, that is, after a period of fifty years, that percentage rose to 12; that is, a grand increase of 3 per cent during a period of half a century. How could it be otherwise when in 1915, during the First World War, when so many promises were being made for the political advancement of Indians, the then Viceroy Lord Hardinge vetoed the resolution for the introduction of compulsory free primary education in India, passed unanimously by the then Imperial Council 75% of whose members were Government nominees. Even these proteges of the Government considered it essential that people should have free primary education; but the shrewd and cunning British Viceroy, fully realising that education is the basis of advancement and progress of any nation, naturally vetoed such a proposal; for the introduction of

education on that basis would have meant the death-knell of the British Empire sooner or later. Therefore, in order to prolong British domination over India, the only course open to him was to deprive the people of knowledge as long as possible. Let us examine what happened during the period 1917 to 1937, a period of 20 years in countries other than India. Russia, after the October Revolution in 1917, increased her percentage of literate people—real literates and not merely those who could only sign their names in some dialect—from 27 to 80 per cent. Turkey brought up the percentage of literacy from 15 to 60 per cent, while Japan was able to raise her percentage of literacy from 40 to 100 per cent. This could only be achieved because the Governments of those countries really cared for the welfare of their own people—the Governments of those countries were national and not foreign.

Further, India has been denied her freedom and yet the percentage of her people who have undergone secondary education was even in 1917 higher than that of England. This fact was admitted in the British House of Parliament by Edwin Montagu, the then Secretary of State for India. But this extent and standard of secondary education, particularly endowments and classes of the Universities and a very large number of educational institutions imparting secondary education in India, are in existence today not because of the Government's effort, but as a result of the endeavours and benefactions of the people of the country. The whole effort of the Government in the matter of education has been extremely poor. The proportion of expenditure allotted to education in the budget in India as compared to the total budget is merely a fraction of that in the budgets of England, America and many other countries. It is so not because there was not enough material in men and money but because the Government of the country did not want the people to become educated. They only wanted them to become clerks to serve their own purposes. Even in the Army up till the First World War it was a well-

laid policy of the Military Department not to enlist recruits who were educated. How can people get encouragement for educating themselves when a determined policy like this was followed by the Government of the country? The whole system of education has degenerated into a purely mercenary proposition. Schools have been allowed to be established without adequate provision for physical welfare of the students studying in them, whether in the shape of physical culture, provision of open spaces for games and physical exercise or provision of midday nourishment, particularly of the young children. Moreover, the relationship between teacher and student has been unsatisfactory. The teachers themselves, particularly the Primary School teachers, are very ill-paid. Many village teachers hardly get more than Rs. 10/- or Rs. 12/- per month. How can we expect them to take real interest in their pupils? They have to find out other means of living and have naturally to devote a good bit of their time to make such living. The older idea of the State or the King providing fully for the upkeep of the teacher and his pupils was a very wholesome one because not only was there closer relationship between the teacher and the taught, but the pupils worked in the fields with their hands and did not feel themselves cut off from the soil and their minds were not orientated into an entirely different channel which would not be in keeping with the station in life which they were likely to occupy in society. But this has become so in the modern days, as a result of which a large section of the educated people in these days have become misfits in society. Those living in the interior of the agricultural areas should be given an education which will have an agricultural bias. Similarly those living in the urban areas should have an education with an industrial bias so that they may be able to fit themselves easily into the society where they are likely to live in future. The present system of education does not provide for any such adjustments and therefore it would be necessary to scrap this system altogether. But this could only be done by introducing a better

system of education which would make every child educated in such a way as to make him fit for the station in life which he is likely to occupy in future. This could only be achieved by a National Government and in a free country. The percentage of Government expenditure on education out of total expenditure is the lowest in India as compared to that in other civilized countries. What better could one expect from an alien Government?

(3) *Health*: The physical condition of the people of India is the poorest amongst all civilized peoples. It is a well-known fact also that the physique of the people in India has greatly deteriorated. They are today less tall and less vigorous than before. That the physical condition has deteriorated is evident from the military records. Previously the percentage of rejection of recruits was very much smaller and the recruits themselves were much stronger and sturdier than they have been for more than a quarter of a century. The expectation of life in India is the lowest in the civilized world. According to the latest estimates, it is 30 years for a man and 32 years for a woman, as compared to 57 years in England and America. It may be said that England and America are rich countries but this cannot be logically advanced as an argument, for how can expectation of life in small countries like Sweden and New Zealand be 59, which is higher than that of even England and America? Infantile mortality in India is almost the highest in the civilized world. Only one or two small nations have a higher percentage of infantile mortality. The annual infant mortality under one year of age is 225 for every thousand infants born whereas in England and America it is about 54. The gross mortality rate in India is about 28.3 per thousand of population whereas it is little over 11 in England and America. The rate of maternal mortality for every thousand births in India is about five to six times that of England. This is not so merely because there are more child marriages but largely because of malnutrition, ignorance and lack of facilities provided for the mother in

prenatal, natal and post-natal stages. On an average there is not even one medical man of any kind for 10,000 persons whereas in England it is about one in 2,000 and in Russia it is now 1 in 1,000. There are over a million deaths on an average per year from malaria and over one hundred million cases of that disease per annum in this country. The figures I have given are those of at least six years ago. There are over one hundred thousand deaths and over one million cases of tuberculosis every year. There are at least one million lepers in this country. There are scores of thousands of cases of cholera and small-pox and hundreds of thousands of cases of dysentery, typhoid and other bowel diseases. Official records from dispensaries, hospitals etc. would show this. And yet these institutions only serve a very small percentage of the total population. There are thousands of places where there is not one such institution within a radius of 15 miles. There are millions of cases which never are attended to by any medical man. As a matter of fact, morbidity figures in India are wholly unreliable and totally disproportionate to the actual state of things. How could such conditions be allowed to prevail unless the Government of the country did not want to increase the physical efficiency of its people? Only a National Government in a free country can take care of the physical condition of the people in the proper way. An alien Government would lose its hold over the people if they became strong and naturally, therefore, it is the object of a foreign Government to keep the people as low in physical and mental condition as possible. Years ago a German statesman once said referring to the extent of malaria in India: "Why should the Englishman prevent malaria in India? Malaria emasculates the people and therefore it is the best friend that the British have there." Leaving aside the millions of undiagnosed or wrongly diagnosed causes of death, there are more than a million deaths per annum in which the cause of death is reported as malaria; the actual figures would probably be very much higher, at least not less than double. Even for the treatment

of malaria, let alone adopting adequate preventive measures, the British Government of India never tried to provide sufficient quinine for the people suffering from malaria. India needs a million and a half pounds of quinine for her 100 million cases of malaria and yet the British Government produced in India only a tenth part of the quantity of quinine which the Government thought the people of India needed. A million and a half pounds for 100 million cases can provide a little over one course of treatment of seven days at the rate of 105 grains per case. It does not provide for a longer course or for repeated relapses. Leaving aside the question of reaching the remotest village and non-availability of suitable machinery for distribution, even if one could have provided half that quantity some appreciable benefit might have resulted. There was no reason why this quantity could not be provided unless it was not desired to do so. Prevention of avoidable human suffering should be the paramount care of the Government of the country. If there were any sympathy on the part of the Government, they could have adopted adequate measures thirty years before. It is evident that they were apathetic, for when the people of India were suffering from lack of quinine the Government quinine plantations in India were selling the crude bark of the quinine trees to the British manufacturers in Great Britain for the manufacture of quinine and its sale in the world market. Similarly, in regard to tuberculosis, provision for preventive measures and for treatment was negligible as compared to the actual requirements. Further, the training of the nurses required thorough overhauling. There was not only discrimination between Indian and European nurses, but the system of recruitment and the service conditions were such that no respectable Indian girl could agree to take the training for nurses. Why such deliberate discrimination was being carried on for so long beats one's imagination unless there was a deliberate policy behind it which was not to the best interests of the people as a whole. Similarly the maintenance apart in watertight

compartments of the preventive and the curative aspects of medicine only handicapped and checkmated the efforts for the improvement of the health of the people. Nor was there any well-organised programme for the maintenance of normal health. The author repeatedly brought this matter to the notice of the Government but it was not listened to then. Several years after, when the Government themselves appointed a medical committee to investigate the whole matter, the author's proposals were fully vindicated and they agreed that these two systems should be amalgamated and there should be only one administrative machinery. Valuable years were lost. Again, why it did not appear to them to be the only sound method, especially when there were examples in the world, is beyond comprehension. The Government of a country is supposed to be looking after the people's health but not so in India. For all practical purposes health was a matter of minor importance. Such was the lead and practical importance given by the Government. The physical deterioration has been very great particularly in certain parts of India like Bengal, Orissa etc. This is well illustrated by the fact that when the British wanted only 80 (!) Bengalis to man the coastal batteries during the 2nd World War, 800 recruits had to be examined to get that number. That means that only 10% of the people of that province were found physically fit. It reflects a standing shame on the Government of the country. The whole system of Government organisation and administration requires complete overhauling but this can only be done by a National Government in a free country, for only they can look to the real interests of the nation.

(4) *Culture*: The culture and tradition of any nation are the foundation on which it continues to progress. India had achieved a very high standard of civilization when the people of Europe were still living in a semi-nude condition in forests and caves. She developed her arts and crafts which became famous throughout the world.

She developed systems of philosophy which still remain unsurpassed in the world, and in this development women took a very important part. Maitreyi and Gargi still remain unsurpassed. In society, woman occupied an honoured position. She did not have to compete with men. The work and position of men and women were considered to be complementary to each other. It was in India that for the first time in the world the principle of *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* (world relationship) was pronounced. According to her own unique genius it was India who spread her civilisation both Eastward and Westward on the basis of synthesis rather than analysis. She herself has been remarkably successful in fusing firmly different races and tribes. In the blood of her people flow the bloods of Dravidians, Aryans, Mongols, Scythians, Persians, Greeks, Turks and Arabians. India's expansion was carried out not merely by fire and sword. It was principally based on love and respect for the others. She gave civilisation, religion, literature, arts and crafts to the others. Her people completely merged themselves with the people of other countries when they went there. They did not try to annihilate them. It was this way of life, the process of synthesis, the process of love and respect for others, that won for her lasting love from those people. Even today, though cut off for nearly a thousand years, she is remembered by the people of Java, Sumatra, Siam, Cambodia, Annam, Burma, China, Japan, Persia, with love and not hatred. Even in the later days this process of synthesis, though slowed down, has been going on. The present civilisation does not belong to one community or race. It is largely the synthesis of the cultures of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs, and Christians. This unique genius of the people of India the British rulers, instead of emphasising and encouraging, have tried to suppress. The glories of the empires of Asoka and Akbar are not given so much emphasis as the differences that arose at the time of Aurangzeb. The children in the schools are never taught the glorious history of their country in the



past. But the differences which arose at times are given prominence so that the children may imbibe this spirit of division and not of cohesion or fusion. No better method could be evolved for destroying the nation's culture and tradition. One could not attain full stature in society without the other. This sense of fellowship is deeprooted. This is best evinced by the fact that if culture and traditions are destroyed, the people become defeatists and lose hope and faith in their future. The British, from platform and pulpit, whether official or missionaries (except a few honourable persons), have decried Indian culture and traditions. Combined with the system of education, this is largely responsible for the deterioration of the faith of the people in their own culture and traditions which has resulted in the adoption of some of the worst habits and manners. The people have been made to give up their sounder and cleaner methods of living, they have been made to feel ashamed to refer to their own culture and traditions and yet sufficient facilities have not been provided for the imbibing of an alternative culture. In the Punjab and some parts of the U.P., a poor Indian, when he goes to meet an Englishman, has to leave his country-made shoes outside when he enters the Englishman's office room. Only up to a few years ago, even in a public institution like the Museum in Lahore, people wearing country-made shoes were made to leave their shoes outside before entering the building. Even today in Calcutta, in many of the European business premises, Indians who are educated and have been to Europe, are not allowed to use the lavatories specially reserved for Europeans. Only a few years ago, special compartments in railway trains were reserved for Europeans which Indians were not allowed to enter. The turning point in the life of one of the greatest Indian leaders was his being refused admission into a club in his home-town. There are few publications by Englishmen where any good praise has been given to the Indians. The vast bulk of the British servicemen in India, where they earn their bread and butter,

have been definitely anti-Indian in their outlook and wherever they got an opportunity they decried us. Even during World War II, Indian Officers—even if they were King's Commissioned Officers—were not allowed admission in clubs in Malaya or to travel in compartments reserved for Europeans. Even today in India there are dozens of clubs where Indians are not admitted as full members with the right to vote. Indians now do not care. The tide has turned. There was a time when the Indians felt lost. Indians no longer consider that their culture and traditions are nothing to be proud of, that their capabilities are any less than those of the Britishers and that they belong to an inferior race. That tragedy has luckily been averted now. It is entirely due to the achievements of the Congress that this suppression of Indian culture has been destroyed. The Swadeshi Movement in 1905 was the turning point which has been greatly strengthened now by Mahatma Gandhi with the social and cultural programme that he has put before the country, some of the salient features being wearing of Indian dress, using home-made cloth, abstention from alcohol, complete removal of untouchability, encouragement and development of rural life, home spinning and weaving. India has rediscovered herself. The blight which the Britishers had cast over the people has been removed. They feel proud of their past culture and traditions. India is turning Eastward.

(5) *Military*: Up to the First World War the Indians were not allowed to man medium and heavy machineguns or field artillery. They were allowed only light machineguns—Lewis and Hotchkiss. Intelligent Indians were not allowed to enlist in the Army. The British military authorities, being afraid of their intelligence, wanted to keep only an ignorant, servile, mercenary army as long as they could. The people of Bengal were refused admission to the combatant ranks in the British Indian Army. If it is true that the Bengalees have deteriorated in physique, whose fault was it? Certainly the Government of the country could not escape condemnation for their poor

condition. Even so, during the First World War, two battalions were raised. In the manoeuvres near Peshawar, the first battalion was pitched against one of the crack British regiments. The former proved without doubt that they licked the latter fairly well, largely because of their superior intelligence. An Indian soldier received Rs. 18/- per month while a Britisher received Rs. 64/- and all found, and even a soap dish is provided for him and his family; not so with the Indian, let alone his family. Up to the First World War, the Indian soldier had to pay for his *charpoi* (bedstead) every time he had to move from place to place as his *charpoi* was left behind in every station. Even during the Second World War, an Indian Officer received far smaller pay and allowances than an English officer of the same rank. After over a century of the British military system, an Indian officer till 1942 had not been able to get a rank in the fighting forces above that of a lieutenant-colonel. Even then their number could be counted on the finger tips, although the total strength of the Indian army personnel in India in peacetime was nearly double that of the British. Only the Second World War compelled the British to throw to the Indians a few crumbs that they could not help, and they made a mountain of these molehills and paraded them before the world. Till now they have not promoted a single Indian officer to the rank of a General; there are only three Brigadiers. It is a matter of shame but is the natural result of a deliberate policy of suppression. The Indian Army has been deliberately riddled with caste so that the chance of cohesion and fusion may be minimised. Among the officers there were at least four different classes—the King's Commissioned Officer, the Indian Commissioned Officer, the Emergency Commissioned Officer, and the Viceroy's Commissioned Officer. Such divisions enabled the British to play one set of officers against another. The cavalry, which has been largely reorganised, was not given tanks as in the case of the British and other armies. Only Brengun-carriers and some armoured cars were given to

them. India has been made to bear a colossal cost for her army. Her army budget varies from 40 to 50 per cent of her normal total budget excluding that for the railway, whereas in other countries, the army budget forms less than 25 per cent. This is true not only of England but of America in normal peacetime. India cannot bear this expenditure without heavily curtailing her nation-building activities, but this is exactly what has happened. Her nation-building activities have been crippled. An excellent example is furnished by the necessity which the British found to (a) import ten thousand American technicians into India in the early stages of World War II; (b) send some batches of Indians to England for training as technicians. This is inspite of 200 years of British rule and 400 millions of Indian population. India can easily do away with all the British Army, maintain the strength of her own Army and yet cut the present cost by 75 per cent. The British did not want it; that is why they put up the proposal that the Indian troops must owe allegiance to the British King for the next ten years. India has no Navy or Air Force worth the name. For her Navy she has only a few very light vessels which could all be sunk by a couple of destroyers, while her Air Force consists of just a squadron. She must develop and expand these important armed forces. For these alone she requires a great deal of money, let alone the cost of organisation and development of such forces as Tank Corps. She will have to raise new money, but she cannot afford the present anti-national luxury. She must scrap the present army organisation which is completely dominated by British officers. The present system must go. India must have her own Army which shall not be hirelings of the foreigners. Her Army must be organised, officered, and commanded by her own sons. And the words of command must be in Hindusthani. Her Army must owe allegiance to her alone and to nobody else.

(6) *Industry*: Long before the dawn of civilisation in Europe, India had achieved industrial prosperity for which

she was renowned throughout the known world. Her shipping, her manufactures of cotton goods, silk materials wrought with gold and silver thread, her fine workmanship on extremely soft woollen material and other arts and crafts had won fame and appreciation amongst the peoples of the different countries with which she traded. It was her prosperity and resources which had attracted the backward and hungry peoples of Europe who came to her shores first as traders. British exploitation has systematically destroyed all her indigenous industries. She no longer possesses the fleet of ships which she had before. Only in very recent years the Scindia Steam Navigation Company launched a certain number of comparatively small ships and they had to face tremendous odds. Their ships carrying cargo to Great Britain were refused the supply of bunkering coal in British ports, which they were compelled to obtain from the Continent of Europe. The whole shipping industry has been monopolised by British companies which were largely subsidized and patronized by the British rulers of India. She has lost her fame as a manufacturer of cotton goods. Dacca was famous for her muslin for centuries. The last of this gossamer-fine textile was exhibited in the International Exhibition in Paris in the 70's of the 19th century. That industry is gone. In the earlier days of the East India Company's rule, the British factors deliberately put the master-weaver out of action. It has been recorded that the thumbs of these master-weavers were cut off so that they could no longer ply their trade. The master craftsmen of India walked aimlessly in villages and towns of this country with hungry stomachs and despairing eyes. Then large numbers of them died away. Today India has lost a very large portion of these master craftsmen. Dacca no longer produces her fine muslin. Long-staple cotton is very little grown now in India. This was not wanted by the British as it would have enabled the Indians to compete with weavers and industrialists in Lancashire who purchased such cotton nearer home in Egypt and United States. Any

National Government would have encouraged the production of long-staple cotton by even actively subsidizing the cultivators who could produce this in suitable soils. It is futile and a travesty of the truth to say that India cannot produce long-staple cotton. India did produce it before. In order to keep down the production of cotton goods in India, an excise tax was levied on such production—a thing unheard of in a free country. On top of this there has been a special preference given to British goods with respect to customs duties on imported cotton goods. For a long time they did not permit finer counts of yarn than 80 to be imported into India unless heavy import duties were paid. They did all they could to put obstacles in the way of introduction of machinery for the production of finer cloth. India produces large quantities of jute and yet velvet, velveteen, plush, and other fine jute products have to be imported from outside—largely from Great Britain. There are hardly even today any plants worth the name which produce machine tools. Only recently some projects have been put on paper. Her mining products have been mostly exported out of India and brought back in the shape of manufactured goods. Tremendous quantities have been taken away but little has been done to produce goods out of the minerals mined in India. For example, mica is exported in thousands of tons to outside countries but there is no plant producing any material which largely employs this mineral. India had to struggle hard to establish one large iron plant. It was established largely with the help of American engineers and Indian capitalists. The British tried to put as many obstacles in the beginning as possible. Had it not been for the Tatas' determined efforts it might not have come into existence. Steel industries in India are few and totally inadequate to meet her requirements. This will continue so as long as an alien government lasts. The Government of a free country would immediately set to work for the establishment of the basic heavy industries which are essential for the development and progress of a country.

Russia's example in this matter should open the eyes of those who are still ignorant. The British Government of India, wherever it could, has given facilities and rights to the British companies for the establishment of basic industries such as the production of caustic soda; for example, the Imperial Chemical Industries were given this right near the Khewra Salt mines in the Punjab. Yet at that time big Indian-owned chemical industries were already in existence, for example, the Bengal Chemical and Pharmaceutical Works Ltd. and the Alembic Chemical Works of Baroda. Very little effort has been made to establish large petroleum works in India. It has been given out that petroleum does not exist in India in large quantities although whatever has been allowed to develop on the two corners of India—North-West near Attock and Campbellpur and in Digboi in the North-East—is in the hands of British capitalists. It only stands to reason that there are other places where, if serious attempts are made, petroleum will be available. In these days of mechanization, petrol and crude oil are essential. We know there are oil seepages in many places, for example, in the hills of Tripura State and yet these are not being developed. India tried for a long time to produce power alcohol, but every obstruction was placed in the way of its manufacture. Sir Mirza Ismail tried his level best to produce power alcohol in Mysore but he had to fight the British Government for a long number of years before this could be permitted. The whole complex behind this was that if India produced her own oil or power alcohol, then the British-owned oilfields of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company and the Indo-Burma Oil Company would lose a large market. So the industry was not allowed to develop. Similarly, there was a time when India produced gold in large quantities and yet to-day India has to import gold worth millions of pounds from outside. This helps British imperialism because it supports the goldfields of South Africa. Some of the largest diamonds famous in the world—the Kohinoor and the Orloff—have been pro-

duced in India and yet to-day the diamond industry does not even exist because if India produced diamonds from her own fields, then she would naturally stop importing diamonds from South Africa where large British capital has been invested. Even the railway freights are so manipulated that importation of material from outside India from other parts of the British Empire would be cheaper than the transfer of the same material from one province to another inside India. For example, it is cheaper to import wheat by ships from Australia into Bengal than to import it from the Punjab. Or, it is cheaper to import South African coal to supply the mills of Bombay and Ahmedabad than take the same by train from the coalfields of Jharia or Raniganj. Such things would be possible under an alien Government, but not under any Government of a free nation. America does not do so, nor does England herself. England subsidizes her own farmers to produce sufficient milk and meat on their own farms and America puts up high tariff walls.

(7) *Currency*: Both the internal currency of India and its foreign exchange rates have been manipulated by the British rulers in India for their advantage and to the loss of the poor peasants and workers who are the real producers of wealth. Even today the ratio of exchange between the rupee and the pound is fixed in London. The rupee is linked with pound sterling and Indians cannot get dollar exchange directly from America. After World War I, when the rupee appreciated to a certain extent as compared to sterling, the British deliberately put the value of the rupee as equal to two shillings. It was done on the so-called recommendation of an Exchange Enquiry Committee which sat to consider this question; in this committee there was only one Indian and the rest of the members were all English. The sole Indian member, Mr. Dalal, protested against this and submitted his minority report and insisted that the rupee value should not exceed more than one shilling and six pence. But his opinion was ignored. Within a short time the Government realised its folly and could not artificially support the rupee



on the exchange basis of two shillings. She just could not afford to go against the current market rate with the result that within a period of three years India sustained a loss of 55 million pounds which largely benefitted the British bankers and industrialists. For a long time the internal fiscal policy was controlled by European-owned and European-managed banks. Indians fought against this and with the greatest reluctance the British Government of India yielded to the formation of the Reserve Bank of India. Still in many cases even today the Reserve Bank has got to reach the public through the British commercial banks. It should have many more branches of its own. During the War, when every other country conserved its gold and refused its export, the British Government of India allowed export of gold from the country with the result that what India had saved in the course of 60 years she lost within three years. Now she is forced to import gold at a much higher price than what she had obtained when she had exported it. This suits the British goldmine-owners and bankers. Her gold price has gone up to five times the price which prevailed before the War, with the result that there is a tremendous inflation of prices within the country. The price of essential articles like food and cloth is already very high now. Rice, which used to sell at Rs. 3/8/- per maund, or in terms of American money, one dollar and ten cents for a unit of 82 lbs., is being sold at the Government-controlled price of Rs. 16/4/-, whereas the price in the open market varies between Rs. 25/- to Rs. 40/- per maund. A piece of cloth which used to be sold for less than a rupee is being sold today for more than six rupees. Had the country been allowed to keep its gold today the people of India would not have suffered. An alien Government can never think of its subject nation prospering. She must extract the last ounce of life-blood from her subject nation in order to maintain her own prosperity. Unless this kind of legalised loot is maintained how can every fifth man in Great Britain live on India? Tens of millions of Indians

must go hungry and starve in order that the standard of living of the British could be maintained at a high level. Only India in bondage can be made to suffer like this. Only the Government of a free India can save her from this calamity.

Some important persons and institutions who have struggled for the independence of this country from outside India are: Hardayal, Raja Mahendra Pratap, Rash Behari Bose, the Gadr Party, the India League of America, and the India Association of London.

*Hardayal:* He was a brilliant student of the Punjab University. His memory was extraordinary. He passed the M.A. Examination in Sanskrit in one year although prior to that he did not know a word of Sanskrit. He started to organise the youths in the Punjab and established 'Young Men's Indian Associations'. Obstacles were put in his path and he soon came into conflict with the authorities. After some struggle he left India and settled in Germany. From there he tried to work out a revolutionary programme, but the German authorities were then influenced by the British and Hardayal could not remain in Germany for a long period. Ultimately he had to quit and finally settled down in Sweden; but it was not possible for him to achieve anything tangible.

*Raja Mahendra Pratap:* He comes from U.P. He made a large educational endowment in Brindaban—"Prem-mahavidyalaya". He tried to do his best to advance the cause of his country, but could not do so for long in India. He had to fight against the British rulers and soon he had to quit his motherland. He had travelled in Europe and had studied the political conditions in some of the countries there. He then came to Afghanistan. In order to advance the cause of his country he found it necessary to renounce his British Indian citizenship and become an Afghan subject. He established contact with the Russians and then ultimately came to Japan. Once the British tried to arrest him but as he had changed his nationality, they could not

proceed any further. Up to the China incident the Japanese Government did not want to offend the British openly. Raja Mahendra Pratap was not wanted in India by the British rulers and they therefore put a ban on his re-entry. The Japanese were not in favour of letting him go out of Japan, on the other hand they tried at first to win him over to their side. In subsequent years differences of opinion arose between Raja Mahendra Pratap and the Japanese authorities. The former was keen on setting up a World Federation of Nations which the Japanese did not appreciate. He was, therefore, allowed to remain in Japan but in a more or less isolated place. It is a matter of great joy for the Indians that this patriot son of India has at last been able to return to his motherland.

*Rash Behari Bose:* He came from Chandernagore, which is a French territory about 20 miles to the north of Calcutta. The Swadeshi Movement and the insurgence of the Indian national spirit had influenced him greatly. He was in the service of the British Government for some time, but his spirit was entirely nationalistic. He worked underground and organised a revolutionary party. The climax of his activity was the throwing of a bomb by him at Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy of India, from a balcony in Chandni Chawk, Delhi, when the Royal procession was passing through the old capital of India in the beginning of 1912. The Viceroy was not killed but was severely wounded. It caused a tremendous sensation throughout India. The British police tried their level best to arrest him, but he always eluded them. He could not be apprehended. He then tried to get some arms and ammunition smuggled into India from Germany during the First World War, but the ship carrying these arms and ammunition was detected and captured by the British near Singapore. Rash Behari had also organised preparations for a simultaneous rebellion of all Indian troops of the British Army stationed in India. But this, too, was detected a few days before the appointed date and foiled. Rash Behari found

it difficult to remain in India for long after these events. So he smuggled himself out under the assumed name of Tagore and slipped away to Japan. In those days Japan had an alliance with the British and therefore, not long after his arrival in Japan, the British Embassy in Tokyo demanded his extradition. In the meantime Rash Behari had come in contact with Prof. Toyama, who was then the moving spirit of the Black Dragon Society of Japan. Prof. Toyama resolved to protect and give shelter to Rash Behari Bose. The Japanese police came to arrest Rash Behari in his lodgings, but he was slipped out by the back door by his friends and taken to a Japanese gentleman's house where he was hidden for some time. This gentleman owned a big bakery. He was kept hidden in this place for some time. But later he disappeared and went underground for about six years. During this time the Black Dragon Society put pressure on the Japanese Foreign Office not to insist on hounding him out. The Japanese Foreign Office tried but could not succeed in finding out his whereabouts. Ultimately, when the Anglo-Japanese alliance came to an end, Rash Behari began to live openly, but in order to get out of the clutches of the British entirely, and in order to gain the sympathy of the Japanese people and get them interested in the cause of Indian independence, he changed his nationality and became a Japanese subject. He married the daughter of the gentleman who had given him shelter when the Japanese Police had come to arrest him. Although he was in exile from his motherland for nearly a quarter of a century and had to change his nationality, still there was an ardent burning spirit within him to see his mother country free from foreign domination. Therefore, as soon as the first opportunity occurred on the outbreak of the Greater East Asia War towards the end of 1941, he got in touch with the Japanese War Office and saw Marshal Sugiyama. Rash Behari Bose tried to impress upon him the fact that so long as India remained under British domination, she would be used as a base for all war activities

against Japan. Her immense resources, manpower and material would help the British war effort against the Axis Powers. As long as India remained a slave country she would be a menace not only to Japan but also to world peace. Although at first he could not impress Marshal Sugiyama, quite a number of other officers of the Military General Staff got interested and finally Japan decided to take up the India question. Still some dissentients remained among her military staff. Marshal Terouchi was one of them. However, with the support of General Tojo, Rash Behari induced the Japanese authorities to take immediate steps to give him help in organising an Indian Independence Movement in South-East Asia. As a preliminary to that, a goodwill mission of the Indians from that part of Asia was invited to attend an informal conference in Tokyo in March, 1942. The part that he played subsequent to this forms a portion of the present narrative. Although Rash Behari Bose could not achieve his dream and died in January, 1945, in Tokyo, still the start that he gave to the Independence Movement in South-East Asia will form an important chapter in the history of India's struggle for freedom. He has left behind a son and a daughter. His wife had predeceased him several years ago.

*Virendranath Chattopadhyaya:* He is a brother of Srimati Sarojini Naidu, the famous poetess of India and is one of the sons of Dr. Aghorenath Chattopadhyaya of Hyderabad, Deccan. He went to Europe long ago and ultimately settled in Germany. In his own way he tried to arouse the interest of the Germans in the liberation of India. He worked for the Indian Independence Movement in Germany, but after the latter's collapse, he went underground and nothing has been heard of him since.

*The Gadr Party:* After the First World War some of the revolutionaries in India, finding it more and more difficult to carry on their activities within the country, had to leave it and quite a number of them went over to the United States of America. There they formed in California

a revolutionary society called the Gadr Party of India. Their object was to get the people of the United States interested in the Freedom Movement of India in the same way as the Irish wanted the help of the Americans for the freedom of Ireland, but their activities soon attracted the attention of the British Embassy in America. Britain succeeded in influencing the Government of U. S. to enact legislation which denied Indians the right of free entry into the States, secured the deportation of those who could not obtain the necessary passport for residence in the States and denied the citizenship of the U. S. to Indians. By these underhand methods Britain succeeded in getting the Gadr Party dissolved and most of the members of the party arrested and deported by 1924. Some of these members went over to Canada and came to India in the ship "Kamagata Maru", but most of them were either arrested or killed.

*The India Association of London:* The India Association was formed in London towards the end of the last century. Its object was to disseminate correct information about the political conditions in India and ventilate amongst the British public India's grievances, political, economic, educational etc. It published a periodical named "India". The Association consisted of Indians and some Englishmen who were well-intentioned towards India. But about the end of the second decade of the present century the association was dissolved and the journal was discontinued. It was really a mistake. Later on Vithalbhai Patel wanted to renew the enlightenment and publicity work in foreign countries but he died before he could realise his project. Mrs. Annie Besant, who formed the Home Rule League in India and also suffered imprisonment on account of her political sympathy with the Indians, took an active interest in the India Association in the earlier stages. Now other Indian associations have grown up in England and they are trying to do what they can to give correct informa-

tion to the people abroad about the political conditions in India and the legitimate demands of the Indians.

*The India League of America:* The India League was formed in America some years ago and many individuals have been trying their best to inform the American public of the real truth about India. The British have spent millions of dollars in America, taken personages like Lord Meston to do anti-Indian propaganda work there, and employed people like Miss Mayo to paint Indians as black as possible. Prof. Dhana Gopal Mukherji, Syed Hussain and J. J. Singh, with the help of other sympathisers like John Dewey, Pearl Buck, Lin Yu Tang and Rev. J. T. Sunderland, have done their best to counter the anti-Indian propaganda which has been carried on by the British through official, semi-official, and unofficial agencies. Unfortunately, many Indians have also sold themselves for their own selfish interests to serve the British purpose. But Vijayalakshmi Pandit's visits to America at the time of the U.N.O. Conference in San Francisco in 1945, and again in New York in 1946, must have been eye-openers for the Americans. I hope they are beginning to realise that all that was painted by the British is not true. A large number of Americans who came to India during the War, must have seen what are the actual conditions here. Mr. Phillips, who was the personal representative of Franklin Roosevelt, the late President of America, made a correct study of the Indian situation and his expositions in the Press made the British feel very uncomfortable and the result was that he had to leave India. America is also realising the wrong that she did to Indians in refusing to grant them citizenship simply because they are Orientals. The world has become much smaller and nations are very much interdependent now than they were before. In order to establish peace in the world, human relationships must be put on a much higher level now than in the past. The India League is doing its best to remove misunderstandings

which had cropped up in the minds of the Americans as a result of intensive British anti-Indian propaganda.

From the foregoing it should be evident to any reasonable person that India has been thoroughly exploited to her disadvantage, her progress has been thwarted and her people have been impoverished. Such things could be stopped only by a National Government in a free India. So long as India remains in her present condition she will remain not only a problem for herself, not only a problem for the British Empire, but also a problem which affects the peace of the whole world. The nation which keeps her under its domination is bound to take an aggressive attitude and try to subjugate others. This is exactly what has happened. India's manpower and material have been time and again made use of by Great Britain for her imperialistic aims and for the conquest of other nations. Indian troops have been utilised in fights in China, Indonesia, Arabia, Egypt and Persia to the utter shame of the Indian people because other nations regard the Indian troops as mercenary and without any conscience. The other nations consider that the Indians, being themselves an enslaved people, do not hesitate to enslave other nations in the interest of a foreign imperialistic power. Moreover, other nations with imperialistic designs may cast covetous eyes on an enslaved India, but an India free and strong would be a great asset in maintaining the peace of the world. It is for these reasons that India must be immediately freed from foreign domination.

---







-----



7 m



-----

Netaji in Tokyo  
(By courtesy of Netaji's nephew Sri Aurobindo Bose)

# INDIA'S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

## CHAPTER I

### THE SEED BED

The War in Europe in the year 1941 was acquiring gigantic proportions and was threatening to extend its shadow even to Asia. But when Japan declared War against America on the 8th December 1941, the Second Great War really developed into a global war. India was unprepared, both in respect of armed forces as well as industrial plants that are essential for supplying fighting forces of a size necessary to meet the new situation. Not only this, but she was also unprepared for organising and administering the civil population during the War, particularly with regard to the control and distribution of essential civil supplies, like food and clothing. She was just making an effort to take anti-air raid precautions in the Eastern areas.

Undoubtedly her man-power was tremendous, but in all modern wars not only is man-power required, but the question of adequate supplies is even more essential. Without a continuous flow of all the different kinds of supplies required by large numbers of troops, the latter cannot combat the enemy forces. For the production of munitions and other war material trained men are essential. India was in a hopeless position so far as the production of war material and equipment for big armies was concerned. Even during peace a large quantity of the equipment was imported. But education in India in general, and vocational and technical training in particular, had been grossly and deliberately neglected. Such trained personnel are very necessary during peace conditions for the mass production of goods, but for waging war they are even more

necessary for the mass production of vast quantities of munitions and materials required for war. It was, then, from dire necessity that the British Government had to import over 10,000 trained American technicians in order to start and develop India's war potential to meet the requirements of her army in the different theatres of war. Nevertheless Indian troops were being rushed for desert warfare in North Africa and jungle warfare in Malaya and Burma.

Indian troops numbering about 60,000 had been concentrated in Malaya together with an Australian division and several British units.

On the declaration of war by Japan on the 8th December, a big convoy carrying a large number of Japanese troops and tanks sailed out from Indo-China towards the north-eastern coast of the Malayan Peninsula. British air reconnaissance work was so poor that they could not locate it in time and Japanese troops began to land in Singora (Siam) just to the north of the Malayan territory. There was a certain amount of opposition by Siamese troops in the area and also by Indian troops who had just then crossed into Siamese territory. But this resistance was negligible and was soon overcome. Almost about the time of this landing, the Japanese had attacked the British aerodrome at Kotahbaru (State of Trengganu) and destroyed a large number of British planes on the ground. A few of these planes got up in the air and, after making a weak effort to combat the Japanese planes, flew away further south.

In the north, in the State of Kedah, a line of defence was prepared under the direction of Maj.-Genl. Merrylines when it became clear that there was a danger of outbreak of war in South-east Asia. The line of defence prepared in this area was called the Jitra Defence Line after the town of Jitra which was close to the place. The place and type of construction of this defence line was very poor. It seemed that there was a bankruptcy of British military

strategy. When Gen. Wavell who was then Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces in S. E. Asia, saw it, he condemned it. But it was too late, as no other defences could be put up after it had been condemned. The troops, although they were stationed in Malaya, did not have proper training and experience of jungle warfare; nor did they possess the proper equipment. For example, there were very few tanks, as it was considered by the British military experts that Malaya was not suitable for tank warfare. And yet the Japanese invaded the country with a large number of tanks with which they swept away the British, Indian, and Australian forces. Only a number of Bren gun carriers were provided which, being open on the top, were excellent targets for hand-grenades thrown down by individual Japanese soldiers often sitting on branches of trees under which these carriers passed.

Indian troops, both officers and the rank and file, were discontented on account of the discrimination shown against them. The British and Australian soldiers had much better facilities and amenities than the Indian troops. Amongst the Indian officers there were four different classes, viz: the King's Commissioned, Indian Commissioned, Emergency Commissioned and the Viceroy's Commissioned officers like the caste system of the Hindus with four classical divisions, viz.: Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaisyas and Sudras. Not only this, but the Indian Emergency Commissioned officers received a much lower rate of pay than the British Emergency Commissioned officers and the officers of the Indian Commission. Further, Indian officers, no matter what category they belonged to, were looked down upon by the Britishers generally. This hatred not only found expression in the Indians not being allowed to be full members of the clubs in Malaya to which the British officers were admitted but even in some of the hotels they being not served when they dared enter them. Indians had experienced this discrimination against them in the matter of admission into clubs even in India; they had hoped that

such discrimination would be absent overseas. But they had little realised that Malaya was the stronghold of British Imperialism and such snobbish behaviour and superiority complex would be even more prevalent there than in India. The natural result of all this was that both Indian officers and men were very much disgruntled. There were actual outbreaks of mutiny and court-martials and courts of enquiry were held in connection with the 4/19th Hyderabad Regiment and the Bahawalpur State Battalion. Such news, of course, was not allowed to be published in India. The British troops as well as the civilians there were too over-conscious of their strength and power and prestige. They did not worry very much about their potential enemy and freely indulged in drinks, enjoyed cabarets and other entertainments. The pitiable appeal made by Lady Brooke-Popham and the subsequent publication of her letter regarding conditions prevailing among the British in Malaya which brought out this feature of abandonment to gaiety and pleasure when danger was at the door amply prove the condition then prevailing among the British. She frantically appealed to the women for nursing services and yet there were an ample number of them to be seen at the dances and cabarets but doing little or no work in connection with the War. The morale of the British troops was low.

Such were the conditions when the Japanese pushed into Malaya from the southernmost extremity of Siam. They rapidly penetrated into Malaya, captured the aerodrome at Singapatani and reached Penang within four or five days. Penang was abandoned by the British in hopeless confusion and fright. The Japanese then swooped southwards and their most remarkable feature in overcoming resistance was their constant outflanking movements. Over the land they pushed forward large numbers of troops on cycles and motor vehicles and on foot through the jungles, making shortcut movements behind the British troops. Great hopes were entertained that there would be a determined resistance on the banks of the Slim river,

but it failed. In the riverine and the coastal regions the Japanese carried out the same outflanking movements by carrying their troops in shallow draft vessels, boats and sampans. The tremendous dash and spirit of the Japanese troops who were well trained in jungle warfare together with their tanks and air support did not allow much time for the British, Indian and Australian troops to rally and muster together for organised defence except in one or two places such as at Mersing and Batupahat. It was a case of continuous running away of the British troops and the Japanese running hard to overtake them. Australians and Indians fought in a far better manner than the British troops. It is also true that when they saw the British running away everywhere they did not think that it was all up to them to stop the enemy at any cost while the British shunned combat and made good their escape. This feature persisted until the Japanese came up to the northern shores of the Johore Straits and the British, Indian, and Australian troops were driven into Singapore from the mainland of Malaya. The last big re-inforcements arrived on the 29th January with 10,000 British and 5,000 Indian troops plus a large consignment of tanks, armoured cars and other motor vehicles. Another small convoy arrived on the 6th February. All these reinforcements were useless and really a free present to the conquering Japanese forces.

By the end of the first week of February, 1942, the Japanese made a concerted attack on the Island of Singapore. The Australians made an attempt to resist but when they saw the British running away, they also yielded. Just before the fall of Singapore the British put up a fight on and around Bukitima Hill. The boast of the British was that Singapore could be defended for a long time, perhaps six months, as it was considered impregnable. But really the battle for Singapore lasted barely a week. There was no dearth of troops, but the fighting spirit was low. The confusion of the Malaya Command at the Headquarters still further accentuated the debacle. On the 14th February,



1942, the British notified to the Japanese that they wanted to surrender on certain terms. The Japanese General Yamashita, the Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese forces, refused and demanded unconditional surrender. Singapore fell on the 15th February, 1942.

The strategy of defence of Singapore, as planned by the British, was such that the island could be defended if the attack came from the direction of the sea, that is, from the east, south, and west. Very little provision was made for the defence of the island against an attack from the north. A few naval guns had been mounted on the island of Blakenmati for its defence. This island was a few miles to the south of Singapore. The guns there were used to a certain extent in the later stages of defence of the island but without much success. The result was that the large coastal defence guns which were mounted on concrete platforms could not fire towards the north as no proper swivel arrangements had been made so that they could be moved round in any direction from which an attack came. This was a blunder of the first magnitude. Further, although British strategy had intended to defend Singapore for a long period, it was a remarkable lack of conception that troops and civilians in a besieged area needed a water supply beyond the control of the enemy. Yet no such adequate supply of water was provided in the defence system of Singapore. There were two small shallow lakes in the Island of Singapore from which the water supply could be drawn for a very limited period. But the main supply of water was coming from the State of Johore carried in a big pipe line over the viaduct across the Strait of Johore. They should have made arrangements for a large number of tube-wells in the island in order to secure the island's water supply, as was done in the case of Calcutta for ensuring the supply of water against air raids at the suggestion of the author. This was another first class blunder. Those who were responsible for the defence of Singapore had made criminal blunders, and should have been made

to account for them. Twenty-four million pounds sterling of the taxpayers' money had been spent and yet such important matters as the proper mounting of coastal defence guns and an alternative water supply had not been provided for.

---

## CHAPTER II

### THE SEED AND ITS GERMINATION

Rash Behari Bose, the Indian patriot who was an exile from India in Japan for over a quarter of a century, on the opening of the Greater East Asia War immediately got in touch with the Japanese Imperial Staff to enlist their sympathy for a campaign against the British in India for the liberation of his Motherland. He had to take pains to convince them of the advisability of launching such a campaign. In this he was greatly helped by many political parties and important personages, such as Prof. Toyama, the then head of the Black Dragon Society. Although there were differences of opinion at the time amongst the Japanese Imperial General Staff regarding this venture, still they agreed first to explore its possibilities and then to see how far the Indians outside India would support it. For this reason they had agreed to establish contacts with the leaders of Indian troops and representative Indians of East and South-East Asia. In this Major Fujiwara of the Japanese Imperial General Staff played a most successful part.

In the very early stages of this war, Capt. Mohan Singh had contacted the Japanese up in the mainland of Malaya and had come to an understanding with them provisionally. After him some other officers had also gone over to the Japanese with bodies of men.

After the defeat on the Slim River, when the Indian troops were retreating they found it more and more difficult to get supplies of food as the Supply Organization was becoming completely disrupted. By the time the Japanese had conquered Kuala Lumpur and passed farther south, a group of several thousand Indian troops had arrived in Kuala Lumpur, of whom about five thousand had signified their willingness to join the Indian National

Army; they formed the first nucleus of the I.N.A. and were stationed in Kuala Lumpur. But they were all in a serious position, particularly in respect of food. The activities of certain Indians here who gave relief to the distressed need special mention. They fed the Indian troops as well as the poor Indian civilians and greatly helped in finding accommodation for the Indian troops and arranged for their regular feeding. Without the help of this band of Indian workers the plight of the Indians in Kuala Lumpur would have been extremely serious. Particular mention must be made of Sardar Budh Singh's untiring efforts. His smiling face and gentle manners earned him the name of 'Baba Budh Singh' amongst the Indians, who respected and loved him. His kindness was unbounded.

On the fall of Singapore, I heard subsequently, a large gathering of Indian prisoners of war was held on the 16th February, 1942 at Farrar's Park in Singapore. There about forty thousand Indian prisoners of war were present, the remaining twenty thousand being up in the mainland of Malaya. Colonel Hunt, as the representative of the British Government, addressed these prisoners first and told them that he was handing them over to Major Fujiwara, the representative of the Japanese Government. Col. Hunt told the prisoners that they must obey the Japanese as they had obeyed the British up till then. There were also other prisoners of war in Singapore, such as Australians and Britons, but they were not handed over to the Japanese in this manner. Only the Indians were singled out for this betrayal. Nor were the Indian Officers consulted about this astounding procedure—I certainly did not know anything about it until two days after the formal handing over. This mean betrayal ended the long ties of service, loyalty and friendship. It showed how at times of crisis the British would not hesitate to play false even with their close friends. Major Fujiwara then addressed the prisoners. He spoke in Japanese and his speech was translated into English and Hindusthani. He said that as the representative

of the Japanese Government, he had taken them over as prisoners. But from the point of view of the Japanese authorities they were free, but as the Japanese were short of rations the Indians would have to work to earn their food. He further said that he was handing them over to Captain Mohan Singh, who was their leader and that they should obey his orders. After this, Capt. Mohan Singh of the 1/14th Punjab Regiment of the British Indian Army addressed the gathering. He said that the British had handed them over to the Japanese and he had taken them over from the latter. The Japanese were not prepared to keep them as prisoners as they were short of rations. He wanted to raise an Indian National Army which would fight for the freedom of India, and he asked all to join it. On hearing this, the vast majority of the prisoners were delighted, and expressed their feelings of joy by prolonged applause.

Within a few days after the 16th February, Indian prisoners of war who were scattered in different places were concentrated in a few definite camps, such as Bidadari, River Valley, Neesoon. Later on other camps were also established, such as in Saleetar, the two Australian camps, Tangah aerodrome etc.

Lt.-Col. N. S. Gill, who had been appointed Commandant of the prisoners-of-war camps by Capt. Mohan Singh, was sent to Saigon in the third week of February, 1942 to contact the higher Japanese military authorities to elucidate clearly the position of the Indian prisoners of war regarding the Freedom Movement. When he came back early in March, he held meetings of officers and men and in that meeting it was revealed by him that nothing would be done which would jeopardise the interests of the prisoners of war in any way.

A preliminary Conference of Indians was held in Singapore on the 9th and 10th March, 1942 where the proposal for holding a conference in Tokyo was received

from Rash Behari Bose. This was agreed to. Accordingly, a small group of representatives of Indians from East and South-east Asia, both from the Indian prisoners of war as well as from the civilians from Malaya, Hongkong and Java, went to Tokyo in March, 1942 where the Indians living in Japan joined them and held a conference, at which the Japanese authorities were also represented, to decide about the Indian Freedom Movement. The conference was held in Tokyo under the presidency of Rash Behari Bose. He clearly specified the aims and objects of the conference so that every delegate attending it could clearly understand and realise the significance of it. The conference lasted from the 28th to the 30th March. After a full discussion it was decided that:—

- (i) an Indian National Army would be formed under the direct command of Indian Officers who would conduct the campaign for the liberation of India;
- (ii) an Indian Independence League be formed to conduct the war of Independence for which it would ask the Japanese Government for help in the land, navy and air forces;
- (iii) the formation of the future Government of India be left entirely in the hands of the representatives of the people of India;
- (iv) in order to carry out the Independence Movement systematically amongst the Indians living in East and South-east Asia, a bigger conference of a larger number of representatives of Indians be called in Bangkok at an early date.

The following persons went to attend the conference:— from the Indian prisoners of war: Capt. Mohan Singh, Lt.-Col. N. S. Gill, Capt. Akram Khan, S. C. Goho, an advocate in Singapore, K. P. K. Menon, an advocate in Singapore, N. S. Ragaban, an advocate of Penang, D. M. Khan Sahib and Malik Sahib from Hongkong, Gyani

Pritam Singh and Swami Satyananda Puri from Bangkok, Nilkantha Iyer from Kuala Lumpur and Osman Sahib from Java. Unfortunately the plane carrying Capt. Akram Khan, Nilkantha Iyer, Swami Satyananda Puri and Gyani Pritam Singh, crashed on a hill in Japan and all the four representatives mentioned above, together with the Japanese interpreter, were killed. Their remains were not discovered until several months later and were collected and sent in suitable caskets to Bangkok.

It was reported that wireless telephonic communication had been established with Berlin and the German General Headquarters were requested to send Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose to the East. The German authorities could not accede to the request at the time.

My hospital unit moved into the Barracks at Neesoon on the 3rd of March, 1942, and on arrival we found that the troops had already moved in. The place was terribly overcrowded. Normally it was meant for about 4,000 troops, but nearly 20,000 had been concentrated there. Water for drinking purposes had to be taken from cemented channels which were draining the seepage water coming from the adjoining low hills; shallow pits had also been dug in the beds of big roadside drains in order to get water. These pits contained subsoil water, and some of them contained also rainwater coming into the drains from the hills as well as from the road. There was no central arrangement for chemical purification of the water, only orders were issued to boil the water before drinking. But there were not sufficient utensils to boil the water for drinking purposes nor was the supervision efficient during the initial stages. As the bathing facilities were also inadequate, men very often drew water from these cemented channels and pits for bathing purposes, and in spite of orders to the contrary, they bathed not very far from these places, with the result that a part of the waste water went into those sources of water either directly or seeped into them through the adjoining ground. Naturally, not very long after an epi-

demic of dysentery broke out. Arrangement for latrines, too, were wholly inadequate. Although there were some W.Cs, the total number available was wholly inadequate for the troops, and many of them had become clogged and were not functioning properly. Several trench latrines had to be constructed but they were highly unsatisfactory partly because of defects in construction and partly because they were not properly looked after; the result was an immense increase in the breeding of flies. The men also fouled the hillsides and valleys to a certain extent which further increased the fly nuisance. As a result of this intensive fly-breeding, the incidence of dysentery became still greater.

The men had brought with them whatever dry rations they had. These, however, did not last long and shortage of rations began to tell upon the health of the men, especially as they had to do hard fatigue work. In the beginning only rice, salt, and occasionally some *dal* was received as prisoners' rations from the Japanese; but no vegetables, fish or meat. Those who had some money with them tried to purchase some vegetables and eggs, but it was difficult to get them as it was not easy to go out of the camps to purchase them. More or less similar conditions prevailed in Bidadari and other camps, except that in Bidadari, drinking water could be obtained from taps. Dysentery had broken out already in almost all the camps, and because of the lowered vitality deaths began to occur. Further, mosquitoes began to appear and malaria too became rampant. Luckily many had mosquito-nets, still a large number of malaria cases occurred. Again, as a result of deficiency in food hundreds of cases of beri-beri appeared. The situation became difficult and medical personnel were put to a very hard test. Both doctors and nursing orderlies did their level best to cope with the situation. Nevertheless 7,000 cases of dysentery with over 600 deaths occurred within the next two or three months. In order to cope with the problem of beri-beri, it was decided to ferment boiled



rice, and issue to the men *Khamira Sarbat*\* both as curative as well as preventive measures. For some time over 700 men used to line up every day to take this 'Khamira Sarbat' which acted exceedingly well. The men were thoroughly examined and those who showed the slightest signs of beri-beri were given this drink. They reacted immediately and recovered completely within a short time. Similarly flour was fermented and chapatis were made out of the *khamira* dough. This also helped greatly in preventing the occurrence of beri-beri cases in the camps. Intensive and strictest discipline in respect of drinking water and in the use of latrines greatly helped in controlling the epidemic of dysentery and bowel diseases. Camp Commanders had to be taken to see the actual condition of latrines in order to convince them thoroughly of the urgency of tightening up the discipline in respect of these matters. Medicines were also short. The British sections of different combined hospitals had, after the surrender, taken away much the larger portion of the drugs and medicines, so that the Indians were deprived of their fair share. When the epidemic of dysentery was at its height, various other medicines had to be tried, such as the bark of mangostein and seeds called *Tokham Rihan* which were quite efficacious in the early stages. Mangostein bark had to be dried, powdered and one teaspoonful taken three times a day. Similarly, *Tokham Rihan* which resembles *Tokmari* seeds was also taken in the measure of one teaspoonful three times a day. When in contact with water it swelled up and produced a good quantity of muci-lage; probably it acted only in a mechanical way. Mangostein bark acted as a strong astringent on the mucous membrane of the intestines and probably was also to a certain extent destructive to the dysentery bacteria. High colon washes with

\* '*Khamira Sarbat*' was prepared thus: The boiled fermented rice was passed through a clean piece of cloth and then diluted with clean water. For taste, a few lemon drops were added to each glass of Sarbat to which a teaspoonful of sugar and a pinch of salt were also added to further improve the taste when they were available.

MB 693 were also very successful, particularly in acute cases of dysentery. After representation to the Japanese, the latter were good enough to obtain a certain amount of the medicines and drugs from the British hospitals. But the supply was very inadequate. Poor diet largely contributed to the lowering of the vitality of the prisoners of war which was accentuated by the hard labour they had to undergo in carrying out fatigue duties for the Japanese military authorities. Pulmonary Tuberculosis appeared soon and began to take its toll. Several representations were made verbally but to no avail. Finally, a letter had to be written to the I.N.A. Headquarters located in Mount Pleasant, but the reply was exceedingly disappointing, to say the least. Major Dhillon, who later deserted and went over to the British, and Major Mahtab Singh, who refused to join the Second I.N.A., were then in the Headquarters of the Supreme Command. Maj. Dhillon was in charge of the Quartermaster-General's Branch, and Major Mahtab Singh was then the Adjutant and Quartermaster-General of the Supreme Command. The latter replied to the representation made on behalf of the prisoners of war by the D.D.M.S. with regard to the supply of vegetables. In his reply he directed that the Indian prisoners of war might follow the example of British prisoners of war who were supposed to have discovered some variety of grass and used these in place of vegetables. When this reply was received at the Headquarters of the Prisoners-of-War Camp at Neesoon, it was forwarded to the D.D.M.S. for his information, who then replied pointing out the futility of the direction, as there were hundreds of varieties of grass and it was not known which of them was really edible. One would not like to experiment upon such an unknown factor when epidemics of dysentery and beri-beri had broken out so severely. But it was mentioned that the prisoners would be willing to eat grass if the Supreme Command could set the example. He further represented that the Supreme Command should not adopt this attitude but on the other

hand should insist upon the Japanese authorities that they were bound to provide for Indian troops the same kind of vegetables which their own troops were having. The Supreme Command of I.N.A. could not shirk the responsibility and should lodge strong representations in the matter. But unfortunately even this did not produce the desired result. When inspite of repeated representations to the Supreme Command of the I.N.A. I failed to get them to improve the rations that were being issued to the prisoners of war, I asked for a direct interview with the officer-in-charge of the Japanese Liaison Office. I went there on the appointed date and time, and explained to the officer (Lt. Kunuzika—who understood and was conversant with English) about the seriousness of the situation. I told him that thousands of cases of dysentery and hundreds of cases of beri-beri had occurred. I said that the Japanese were not supplying the rations which they should have supplied according to International Law. He was at first not too sympathetic and tried to be officious. I told him that I could not understand the meaning of making the Indians suffer unless they wanted to decimate and kill the Indian prisoners of war. If the Japanese wanted to do so, a much more humane method would be to shoot them down with machineguns, and I would be prepared to offer myself as the first victim as I could no longer stand the privations and sufferings of my fellow-prisoners. At this he softened down and promised to do his utmost for improving the rations. As a result of this interview the rations improved. In place of simply rice and salt and occasionally a little *dal* that we were getting, the supply of vegetables was arranged, and even fish began to appear in the rations from time to time. Arrangements were also made to establish a Bazar outside the prison gate so that people who could afford might make the necessary purchases. This markedly improved the situation.

The question of enlisting volunteers from the prisoners of war in the Indian National Army was discussed from

time to time amongst groups of officers and men both of the combatant ranks as well as medical and other non-combatant personnel. But the treatment meted out to the prisoners, and the conditions under which they lived, greatly discouraged them from joining hands with those who were in charge of the formation of the I.N.A. The points discussed in approaching the problem were as follows:—(1) Do we call ourselves Indians? (2) Do we want the independence of our country? (3) We must be all united if we want our freedom. (4) Should we join the I.N.A. for that purpose? The majority decided in the affirmative. But the actual response in enlistment was poor.

Capt. Mohan Singh, after his return from Tokyo, called a conference of officers at Bidadari Camp in April, 1942. It was at this conference that for the first time he frankly submitted his proposals for the formation of the Indian National Army as a part and parcel of the Indian Independence Movement which was going to be started in the near future. When he had explained the situation and stated his proposals it was evident that we were going to take a very momentous step if we accepted what he said. Undoubtedly every Indian who loved his country wanted to see her free, but we had to realise the limitations from which we were suffering and naturally we had to be very careful before we moved in a matter of this type and magnitude. We had to judge it from all sides for, once we took the step, there could be no going back. We had to do or die. We had to make sure about our determination to carry out the campaign and be assured of correct leadership. I therefore asked Capt. Mohan Singh two frank questions. I asked him (a) to take an oath on Guruji and state clearly that he was not in the hands of anybody, (b) that he would never betray us and would lead us correctly. I explained before the meeting that once we took the step forward, there could not be any retreat. It would have to be a fight to the finish. We had to consider

not only ourselves, but the lives and the future of sixty thousand Indian prisoners of war who had placed their interests and confidence in us. He solemnly took the oath and clearly stated that he was not in the hands of any one and that he would lead us correctly. This cleared the atmosphere very greatly. But still we had to think very carefully as the problem was extremely serious and of the utmost importance. After this assurance the meeting dispersed.

As the Headquarters Staff of the Supreme Command of the I.N.A. had become very unpopular because of their poor efforts regarding the improvement of rations and lessening of fatigue work, and as this unpopularity was shown by the poor response regarding volunteering for the I.N.A., it was decided to completely reorganize the Supreme Headquarters and combine with it the Headquarters of the prisoners of war. Most of the Headquarters Staff of the Supreme Command was changed in order to increase its efficiency and popularity. The following appointments were made:—

A.Q.—Capt. M. Z. Kiani, Adjutant—Lt. Habibur Rahman, Quartermaster—Lt. Arshad, D.D.M.S.—Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji. In addition to these, Capt. Mohan Singh appointed Lt.-Col. G. Q. Gilani and the author as his Advisers.

In the earlier stages of imprisonment, the language difficulty was a big problem in the relationship between the Japanese and the Indian prisoners of war. Psychologically also, the Japanese were quite different until they understood the Indians. Several incidents occurred which did not help in the development of good relationship. For example, the instructions were that when the prisoners passed the guard room at the entrance gate they were to salute the guard. On one occasion, a V.C.O. passed the guard room and he saluted. Evidently it was not noticed. When he had gone away some distance the guard came in front of him and slapped him. He protested but it was of

no avail. The guard went back to his position, and the V.C.O. went forward towards the camp. After the latter had gone a few steps, the same guard came forward again and stood in front of the V.C.O. and saluted him. He said he had not noticed the two stars on his shoulders and he was wrong in slapping him. So he offered his own cheek to be slapped by the V.C.O. This showed a strict sense of discipline, but at the same time the impetuosity and the excitability were also evident. In another instance, in Neessoon Camp the Japanese had asked for some cups and saucers from the Indian Officers' mess. These were sent to the place where they were demanded and were later taken back under the idea that they were no longer required. It was a misunderstanding and a Japanese officer came and set upon one of the Indian officers. The Japanese thought that the Indian officer was responsible for having the crockery brought back when the Japanese still needed it. There was no rhyme or reason for presuming it.

In yet another instance, when the relationship had greatly improved, the Japanese had agreed to arrange for the supply of milk for the Indian prisoners of war. They were told that milk could be easily provided if the Japanese could manage to obtain some cows and allow the prisoners to keep them in the camp. Within a few days about sixty bulls, strong and healthy, were procured and sent to the camp. At first it was not realised why the bulls were sent. It was thought that possibly they wanted to start agriculture within the camp. When the Japanese were reminded about the milk, they promptly replied that they had already sent sixty of the animals that we wanted. When they were told that they were bulls, they replied, "Were not they good enough to yield the milk we wanted?"

In accordance with the decision arrived at in the Tokyo Conference, towards the middle of June, 1942, representatives of the Indian prisoners of war together with the representatives of civilians who were elected by the Indians

in the different parts of East and South-east Asia—Malaya, Burma, Siam, Java, Sumatra, Borneo, Phillipines, Japan, Manchuria, Nanking, Shanghai, Canton, Hongkong—met at a conference in Bangkok under the presidency of Rash Behari Bose. The conference lasted from the 15th to the 23rd June, 1942. At the beginning of the conference, Rash Behari Bose hoisted the tricolour National Flag amidst shouts of joy and cheer. Over a hundred delegates attended the conference in which there were Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Christians. Rash Behari Bose spoke first. He clearly explained the significance of the conference and its aims and objects. After his opening speech, Capt. Mohan Singh spoke for several hours, giving a detailed account of his experiences in the Malayan campaign, and how he got in touch with the Japanese military authorities in Malaya and was able to form a small nucleus of the Indian National Army while the campaign was still going on and actually fought against the British while they were retreating from the north to Singapore. The conference, after a full and free discussion which lasted nine days, adopted the following resolutions:—

1. That an Indian Independence League of the Indians be established for the achievement of the freedom of India.

2. That the Indian Independence League carry out the Independence Movement amongst the Indians in East Asia, mobilise all their resources, and establish territorial, state and sub-branches throughout East Asia. The Movement would be carried out in such a way that it conformed as closely as possible to the ideals of the Indian National Congress.

3. That an Indian National Army be formed comprising the Indian troops and civilians of East Asia. Capt. Mohan Singh would be the Commander-in-Chief of this Army of Liberation for India. The Indian Independence League would make arrangements for the supply of men,

material, and money required by the Indian National Army, and would request the Japanese Government to supply the necessary arms and equipment, ships and aeroplanes required by the Indian National Army which would be commanded entirely by Indian officers and would fight only for the liberation of India.

4. That a Council of Action be established for carrying out all necessary actions in connection with the Independence Movement and prosecution of the War of Independence.

It was decided that there would be a President of the Council of Action, and four Members. Rash Behari Bose was elected the first President of the Indian Independence League, and of the Council of Action, and the following were elected members—K. P. K. Menon, Bar-at-Law, Singapore; N. Raghavan, Bar-at-Law, Penang; Capt. Mohan Singh; Lt.-Col. G. Q. Gilani.

The members of the Council of Action decided to take up different portfolios amongst themselves, such as, Finance, Publicity and Propaganda, Welfare, Army etc. Capt. Mohan Singh took up the portfolio of the Army as well as the position of the Commander-in-Chief. One of his advisers advised him not to accept this dual position but to accept the one or the other. He was reminded that in India public opinion had all along objected to and strongly protested against the dual position held by the Commander-in-Chief, that is, those of the Member-in-charge of the Army and the Commander-in-Chief. This mistake should not be repeated here, for at a time of crisis, his position would become extremely difficult and untenable unless he was in a position to control the whole Movement himself. Unfortunately he did not listen to this advice, and decided to work in this dual capacity.

The resolutions were passed unanimously. The whole of East and South-east Asia was divided into zones, and



allotted a specific number of votes for the purpose of coming to a decision when any matter was to be put to the vote in a future conference. Following were the zones or territories that were formed in this connection:—

Burma; Malaya; Java-Bali; Phillippines; Sumatra; Siam; French Indo-China; Hongkong-Macao-Canton; Borneo; Shanghai-Nanking-Manchuria; and Japan.

Malaya and Burma had the largest number of votes, that is, 14 each; the other comparatively less. These votes were allocated on the basis of the strength of the population and the economic importance of each zone. Burma and Malaya undoubtedly held the largest number of Indians in South-east Asia, and these territories were of very great importance from the economic standpoint also.

Although there were many Muslim representatives who had come from the different territories to attend the conference, many in Bangkok did not take an active part in it excepting Moulvi Mukaddas Sahib, Moulvi Akbar Ali Sahib, Salehbai Sahib. Towards the latter part of the conference, when probably the dissenting Muslims saw that the conference had been a great success, a special party was given by the so-called Muslim Youths' Association in Bangkok to Capt. Mohan Singh, in which they declared that although they had not taken an active part in the conference, they had sympathy with it. Capt. Mohan Singh gave a very frank and clear reply to their address which was to the effect that although he appreciated their hospitality, he made it clear that for Muslim support he did not depend solely upon the sympathy of the Muslim Youths' Association of Bangkok, as he had plenty of other prominent Muslim colleagues coming from different parts of South-east Asia who had come to attend the conference. He specially mentioned that the Muslims coming from Burma (Sultan Mahmud Sahib, Mushtaq Randheri Sahib, Abdul Sattar Sahib and others) had taken a very keen and active part in the deliberations of the conference.

In the course of the conference a huge public meeting was held at the Crafts and Industries Hall (Silpakaran Hall) for the reception of the delegates attending the conference. The hall was packed to capacity and a large number of people were standing on the open grounds outside the hall. Many important members of the Indian delegation coming from different parts of East and South-East Asia spoke at this meeting in order to fully acquaint the Indian population with the aims and objects of the conference, and the Indian Independence Movement.

Marshal Lon Pibul Songgram, the Premier and Commander-in-Chief of Siam, expressed the greatest sympathy with the efforts of the Indians to liberate their country. He invited the principal members of the conference to his residence where he extended to them an informal reception.

Towards the end of the conference in Bangkok, a big dinner was given in honour of the delegates attending the Indian Independence Conference. I was sitting at one of the tables and overheard a confidential conversation between two high-ranking officers, both of whom tried to sabotage the Movement, and one of whom has been actually reinstated in the British Indian Army. This was Major Mahabir Singh Dhillon, who was then acting as the Quartermaster-General of the Supreme Command of the I.N.A. I reported the matter later to Rash Behari Bose.

At the end of the conference, a joint informal meeting was held with a number of Japanese officials including Mr. Koyama, who was a member of the Imperial Japanese Diet. The Japanese expressed the fullest sympathy with the aims and objects of the conference, and promised to give wholehearted support in putting into action the resolutions adopted.

Towards the end of the conference a big public reception was given by the Siamese Government to the Indian delegates attending the Indian Independence Conference. The pavillion and the ground immediately adjoining

Lumbini Park were beautifully decorated. In the pavillion there was a rotating platform on which were seated orchestra parties which were changed from time to time by rotating the platform. The pavillion was very artistically decorated. The Indian National Tricolour Flag was flying everywhere along with the flags of Burma, Siam, China, Japan and other countries. After the tea party, different kinds of dances were exhibited by large groups of Siamese girls. These were greatly appreciated, but the most charming of all the dances was the one in which the soul of India was represented by a girl and Tricolour Flags were held in the hands of the members of the dancing group. They carried out poses one of which was the depiction of the outlines of India by the members of the dancing group. They wore sarees with tricolour borders. The whole picture presented by the posing of the artistes was simply charming. A tremendous ovation was given by the whole audience when these dances were exhibited. High-ranking Siamese civil and military officers, including Ministers and high-ranking Japanese military officers and a large gathering of Indians, formed the audience.

---

### CHAPTER III

#### SEEDLING SPROUTS ON ANOTHER SOIL

While under the leadership of Rash Behari Bose and General Mohan Singh the Indian Independence Movement was taking shape in the Far-East in the organisation of the Indian Independence League and the first Indian National Army, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was working on similar lines in Europe particularly in Germany. When the Second World War broke out Netaji was detained in an Indian prison without any trial, purely as a precautionary measure. The World War appeared to Netaji to offer a rare opportunity for achieving India's independence. Determined to get out of the Indian prison and to play his part in the national cause he risked his life by resorting to hunger-strike. After initial indifference the British Government was forced to release him from prison but permitted him to stay at his Calcutta residence under strict Police surveillance. Netaji thus had better luck than McSwiney or Jatin Das.

On a study of the world situation it appeared to Netaji that the best way to work for India's liberation was to escape out of India and to organise an armed attack from outside with the help of the Powers, which were at war with Britain and her Allies. This was at the beginning of 1941, when Japan was still out of the war. Netaji decided therefore to proceed to Russia or Germany and baffling the Police guards at his residence started on a most perilous journey on the land route through the North-West Frontier of India. The details of this adventure are still a mystery beyond the fact that in February, 1941, Netaji spent a few weeks in Kabul before he succeeded in securing through diplomatic channels an air passage to Germany. Netaji's activities in Europe before he went over to the Far East to organise the Azad Hind Movement there are still shrouded

in mystery. We can get only occasional glimpses of his work there through a few radio broadcasts from Berlin.

Netaji broadcasted from Berlin a message to his countrymen on the 20th April, 1942, of which the following is an extract :—

“In spite of British propaganda it should be clear to all right-thinking Indians that in this wide world India has but one enemy, the enemy who has exploited her for over a hundred years, the enemy who sucks the life-blood of Mother India, British Imperialism.

“I am not an apologist of the Tripartite Powers ; that is not my job. My concern is with India. When British Imperialism is defeated, India will get her freedom. If, on the other hand, British Imperialism should somehow win the war, then India's slavery would be perpetuated for ever. India is, therefore, presented with the choice between freedom and slavery. She must make her choice.

“Britain's paid propagandists have been calling me an enemy-agent. I need no credentials when I speak to my own people. My whole life is one long, persistent, uncompromising struggle against British Imperialism, and is the best guarantee of my bonafides.

“All my life I have been a servant of India. Until the last hour of my life I shall remain one. My allegiance and loyalty have ever been and will ever be to India alone, no matter which part of the world I may live in.

“If you make a dispassionate and objective study of different theatres of war to-day, you will come to the same conclusion as myself—that nothing on earth can prevent the rapid collapse of the British Empire.....Already the outposts in the Indian Ocean have passed out of the hands of British sea-power.....Mandalay has fallen and Allied troops are practically expelled from Burmese soil.

“Countrymen, when the British Empire is disappearing, the day of India's deliverance approaches. I want to remind you that in the year 1857 began India's first War of

Independence. In May, 1942 has begun her last War of Independence. Gird up your loins. The hour of India's salvation is at hand.

"Azad Hind ! Fight and win India's liberty, and then build up in India, with full freedom to determine her own future—with no interference ! Free India will have a social order based on the eternal principles of Justice, Equality and Fraternity."

Netaji was responsible for the raising of the Indian National Army in Europe. About this Army detailed information is still lacking. We quote below an address which Netaji delivered to the men of his Army in June, 1942 :—

"Brave soldiers ! To-day you have taken an oath that you will give fight to the enemy till the last breath of your life under the National Tricolour. From to-day you are the soldiers of the Indian National Army of Free India. You have volunteered to shoulder the responsibility of forty crores of Indians. From to-day your mind, might and money belong to the Indian Nation.

"Oh Friends ! You have the honour to be the pioneer soldiers of Azad Hind Fauj. Your names will be written in golden letters in the history of Free India. Every soldier who is martyred in this holy war will have a monument in Free India. The coming generations will shower flowers on those monuments. You are very fortunate that you have got this valuable opportunity to serve your motherland. Although we are performing this ceremony in a foreign land, our heads and hearts are in our country. You should remember that your military and political responsibilities are increasing day by day and you must be ready to shoulder them competently. The drum of Indian Independence has been sounded. Only we have to prepare for the battle ahead. We should prepare ourselves as early as possible so that we can perform the duties we have shouldered. I assure you that the time is not far off when you will have to put to use the military skill which you possess.

"To-day we are taking the vow of independence under the National Flag. A time will come when you will salute this flag in the Red Fort. But remember that you will have to pay the price of freedom. (Freedom can never be had by begging. It has to be got by force. Its price is blood. We will not beg freedom from any foreign country. We shall achieve freedom by paying its price.) It does not matter how much price we have to pay for it. I assure you that I shall lead the army when we march to India together. The news of the ceremony that we are performing here has reached India. It will encourage the patriots at home, who are fighting empty-handed against the British. Throughout my life it was my ambition to equip an army that will capture freedom from the enemy. To-day I congratulate you because the honour of such an army belongs to you. With this I close my speech. May God be with you and give you strength to fulfil this pledge, which you have taken voluntarily to-day *Inquilab Zindabad*."

The oath that was taken by the members of the Azad Hind Fauj in Europe was worded as follows:—

"In the name of God I take this holy oath that to liberate India and thirty-eight crores of my countrymen I will be absolutely faithful to our Leader, Subhas Chandra Bose, and shall always be prepared to sacrifice my life and all I have for the cause."

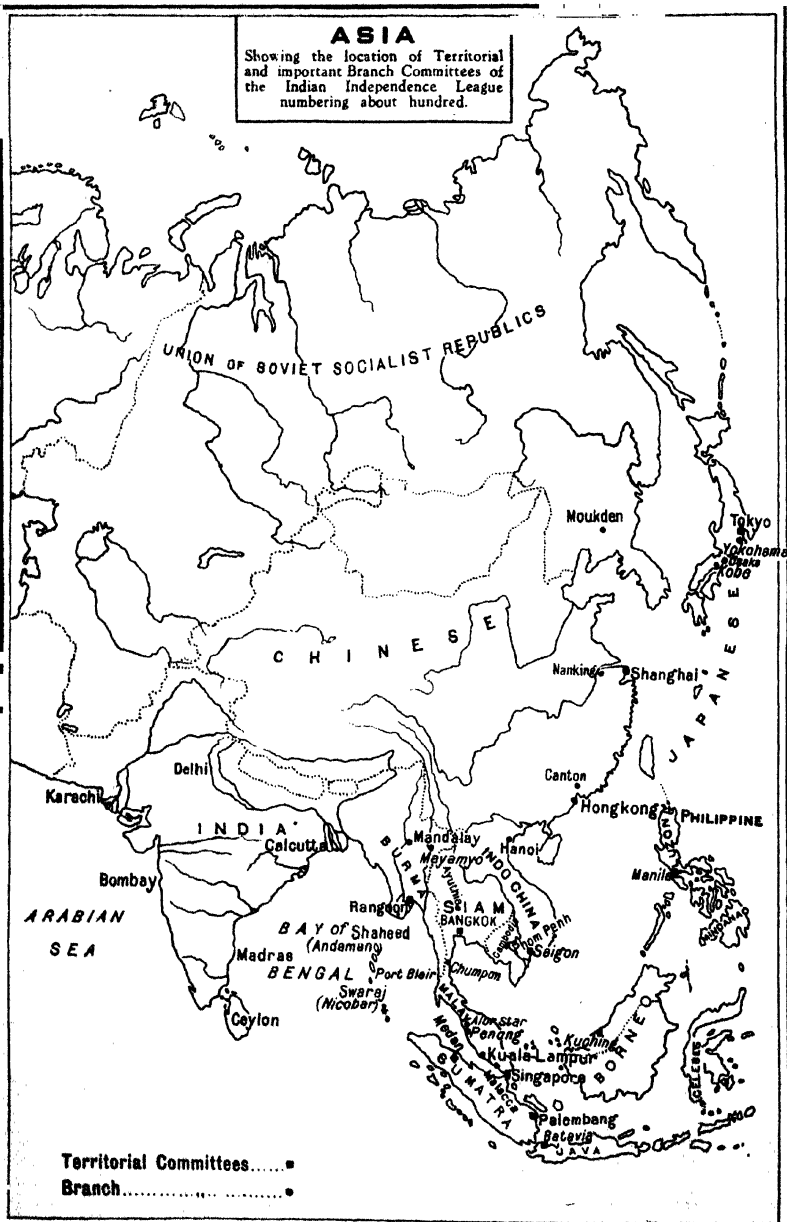
---





# ASIA

Showing the location of Territorial and important Branch Committees of the Indian Independence League numbering about hundred.



## CHAPTER IV

### THE YOUNG SHOOT

#### Indian Independence League

After attending the Bangkok Conference, all the members returned to their respective areas and started to establish Indian Independence Leagues in their respective areas. Each country, and in some cases a group of areas, was organized as a Unit, and it set up its Territorial Committee with its Independence League Headquarters located at a convenient place, and every effort was made to establish as many branches as possible. Indians were invited to become members of the League on payment of a fee of one dollar or one rupee, as the case might be. Thousands of people availed themselves of this privilege. There were ultimately over two hundred thousand members of the Indian Independence League in Malaya alone. It was found that a large number of labourers could not pay even this one dollar at one time for their membership. So it was decided that they could pay in four equal instalments. To each enrolled member was issued a card which showed his or her name, number of membership and residence. These membership cards were recognized by the Japanese authorities and they greatly helped the Indians in obtaining railway accommodation for travelling as well as despatch of goods. Also when an Indian was a member of an Independence League, he could ask for the support of the League for his defence in case he was charged by the Japanese authorities with any offence. The Japanese authorities declared that they would treat Indians as a rule, and particularly those who were members of an Indian Independence League, as 'friendly aliens' and they were not be subjected to restrictions of movements and trades and were to be allowed other facilities (such as safe-guard-

ing of their properties) which were not granted to enemies or subjects of enemy countries, as they were not treated as friendly aliens. In securing all these benefits for the Indians, Rash Behari Bose played a very significant part.

*Malaya-Singapore:* In Singapore S. C. Goho was elected Chairman of the local branch of the Indian Independence League. It did a great deal of relief work amongst the Indians. This work was well organized and was done under the control and supervision of B. A. Malal. Not only was relief given in cash and kind, but the League had opened up a dispensary to give medical aid to those suffering from diseases. This was very highly appreciated, because at that time it was very difficult to get medical relief as the Japanese had not yet been able to organise fully. And even when they had organised it, the demand was too great. The League also opened a home for destitutes and cripples where sometimes the inmates numbered nearly two hundred.

Branches of the League were established in Penang, Kuala Lumpur and dozens of other places.

*Burma:* Soon after the occupation of Burma by the Japanese, an Indian Association was established with B. Prosad as its Chairman. The establishment of the Indian Association was helpful to the interests of the Indians, particularly in respect of their property. After the Bangkok Conference the Association was merged into the Indian Independence League. B. Prosad still remained Chairman, but after a time he had to relinquish the chairmanship and go to Malaya. Karim Gani then became Chairman. With the establishment of the Indian Independence League the interests of the Indians were further secured, but much more still remained to be done.

*Siam:* After the Conference in Bangkok there were two Indian institutions in Bangkok, the object of both being the attainment of India's freedom. Deb Nath Das was the Chairman of one of these institutions (Indian

National Council) while Sardar Iswar Singh was the Chairman of the other. These two institutions continued to act independently for some time. With the establishment of the League Headquarters in Bangkok, these differences were composed to a certain extent, but still they continued to exist separately underground. As a result of these differences, actual work was hampered for a time. Finally all the differences were composed and work was started with vigour and zeal.

*Hongkong-Macao-Canton:* In Hongkong, an Independence League was established with Dr. Naidu as the Chairman. There was quite a large number of Indian prisoners of war here, several hundreds of whom volunteered to serve the League.

*Philippines:* The number of Indians here was comparatively small, but they were very enthusiastic and there was a possibility of their arranging for supplies to be sent on to Singapore.

*Indo-China:* After occupation by the Japanese, an Indian Association was established with its headquarters in Saigon, with a branch at Hanoi. As the French would not agree to the establishment of an Indian Independence League, we had to be content with the establishment of an Indian Association. The Japanese also advised the adoption of this procedure. The French did not like the idea of the coloured peoples shaking off the yoke of domination of the Europeans and, therefore, they were afraid of the Annamites revolting against them if they saw the Indians making a united effort for the achievement of independence of their country. The first Chairman of the Indian Association was Nuruddin Sahib. The Indian Association could not do much propaganda work, but they collected over three million *piastres*\* which they sent as their contribution to the Indian Independence League Headquarters at Singapore.

---

\* *Piastre* is the name for the Spanish dollar worth about 4sh.

Indian Independence Leagues were also formed in China (Shanghai) and in Japan.

Certain sections of the Muslim public who had already joined the Movement found it difficult to get all sections of the Muslims to join the Movement freely for two reasons: One was the singing of *Bandemataram* as the National Song. They disapproved because it meant offering obeisance to the Mother which staunch Muslims objected to. They said that according to their interpretation of their religious laws, they could only do obeisance to God and no one else. Secondly, they did not agree to the Flag, as some of them represented that it was only a Hindu flag. So an unofficial conference was held in the bungalow of Yellapah Sahib near the sea-beach in Singapore, to which some prominent members of the Muslim and Hindu public as well as some highranking army officers were invited. They discussed the matter freely and frankly. With regard to the question of salutation, it was pointed out to the Muslim leaders that they (particularly those who did not join the Movement) had actually been doing obeisance intended for the Japanese Emperor as well as to the Japanese Flag at all important public functions. It was, however, ultimately decided that the flag without the *Charka* should be accepted and the song should be continued for the time being until such time as an all-India leader came to Malaya and decided finally on this matter. In the meantime, however, the Muslims should not be insisted upon to sing the *Bandemataram* song if they did not want to, and there should be no compulsory singing of the song at every public function, particularly where there were Muslims who did not approve of it. It must be said to the great credit of the Muslim officers of the Azad Hind Fauj that they did their best to explain to the Muslim civilian gentlemen the true meaning of the *Bandemataram* song and what it signified, and also the significance of the Tricolour Flag.

The Council of Action met from time to time, but unfortunately differences of opinion began to appear early,

and ultimately a definite cleavage occurred amongst the members. Some among the members wanted to know more about the formation of the I.N.A. and tried to find out about the details of alleged highhandedness in connection with its formation, while the other members resented such interference and tried to get the upper hand themselves. This unhappy tussle went on. It was most unhappy that they did not pull their full weight in close co-operation. There was too great divergence of opinion and lack of co-operation between the two groups resulting in inefficiency and waste of time and energy. It hindered the work and impeded the progress of the Movement. Many examples could be quoted, but perhaps one example may suffice to illustrate this unhappy situation. Since the beginning of the year (1942) rubber plantations and mines in Malaya had largely ceased to function. Here and there a certain number of plantations owned by Indians continued to work partly, but by the middle of February almost everything came to a standstill. There was very great unemployment amongst the Indians in Malaya, particularly amongst the labouring classes. Sickness too, was widespread among them. There was consequently very severe economic distress among the labourers in those plantations where Indians predominated and this was further accentuated by a serious outbreak of Malaria in epidemic form during the summer and the early rainy season. Due to the stoppage of practically all systematic anti-malaria work in these plantations and mines, the epidemic was taking heavy toll of the labourers and their families. In fact, there was acute distress among the labourers in the plantations throughout Malaya. They urgently needed both medical and economic relief. After the return of the Indian delegation from the Bangkok Conference, urgent representations were made by the Indian public and the branches of the Indian Independence League to the Council of Action for taking remedial measures. It was decided by the Council that before any

such measures could be taken a survey should be carried out in order to assess the extent of the economic as well as medical relief that might be required. Certain Army officers were needed to undertake this, and it was decided that Lt.-Col. (Now Maj-Gen.) S. C. Allagapan and myself would be suitable for the purpose. I was told to select my assistant to help in the work, and I accordingly selected the late Maj. Rangachari to help me. Our services were put at the disposal of the member-in-charge of the portfolio of "Welfare" by the member-in-charge of "Military Matters" under whom we were placed at Singapore. The member-in-charge of the portfolio of "Welfare" wired back to the member-in-charge of "Military Matters" that only Lt.-Col. Allagapan was to be sent to Penang. He was to carry out the survey and submit his proposals to me for scrutiny and myself and my assistant were to remain in Singapore. The member-in-charge of "Military Matters" insisted that I should carry out the survey and that all of us should go to Penang, and after consultations there with the member-in-charge of "Welfare", prepare our programme, do the work, and submit the report in due course. This procedure was objected to by the member-in-charge of "Welfare". He insisted that only Lt.-Col. Allagapan should proceed to Penang. The wires and counter-wires continued for nearly a month, and a lot of highly valuable time was wasted and differences of opinion were accentuated. There was an unfortunate lack of appreciation of the urgency of the situation and of assessment of proper values. Lt.-Col. Allagapan was undoubtedly an eminent surgeon and his help would have been most valuable in the establishment of hospitals, but the type of survey work that was to be carried out at this stage was much more in line with the Public Health work of which I had some experience. Unfortunately, due consideration was not given to these aspects of the problem and personal inclinations were given preference. In this matter I cannot help mentioning that the member-in-charge of "Military Matters" was in the right and he ultimately

insisted that all of us should go to Penang. On our arrival there, Lt.-Col. Allagapan was kept in Penang and was put in charge of the Swaraj Institute which had been established there. A programme of tour for myself and for Maj. Rangachari was prepared, and we carried out the necessary sample surveys in which we covered practically all the important States of Malaya. It took us a little over a month to do this, after which we submitted our report, which included schemes for remedial measures, to the member-in-charge of the portfolio of "Welfare" in Singapore in the beginning of September. That report never saw the light of day and was shelved. Personal differences and jealousies continued to mount up and intensify antagonistic feelings. It was indeed very unfortunate.

The news of the "Quit India" Resolution, when it had been passed on the 8th of August, 1942, was heard over the Singapore Radio. This greatly enhanced the spirit of the Indians in East Asia. Even those people who had some doubts, or were lukewarm towards the Movement, greatly welcomed this revolutionary proposal on the part of the Indian National Congress in India, and whole-heartedly joined the Movement in South-East Asia. We also heard the sad news of imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi, the Congress High Command, and a large number of Congress workers on the following day, the 9th of August. And yet in a confidential publication issued by the Government of India, a copy of which we captured later on the Indo-Burma frontier in the early part of 1944, the British Government of India strongly condemned Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress for the countrywide revolutionary movement and sabotage that occurred in India for the next four or five months. Whatever may be said of others, surely Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress High Command, who were behind prison bars, could not be accused of what happened after they had been imprisoned. Certainly they could not be charged with the adoption of methods of violence, but such were the reports of the Intelligence



Service which the British employed and the conclusion they drew on these reports.

*Indian National Army:* For the Indian prisoners of war it was decided that suitable officers should visit each camp, first in Singapore and then in the mainland of Malaya, and give lectures to the officers and men in order to present to them the problem of the independence of India, the significance of the Indian Independence Movement in Malaya and South-east Asia, so that after thorough deliberation every officer and man would be at liberty to join the Movement and the Indian National Army as a free volunteer. A programme of lectures to be given by officers who had attended the conference in Bangkok was arranged accordingly. But there were a number of other officers who not only carried on counter-propaganda intensively, but actually vilified the officers and men who were in sympathy with the Movement. In some sections not only was counter-propaganda carried on, but also the men were actually cowed with threats of reprisals. In the Indian Army the men ordinarily were illiterate and easily influenced by their superior officers. The officers also tutored the men in such a way that they were completely misled and did not understand the true position at all. It was because of these evil influences that a large number of men and officers held back from joining the I.N.A. An example may be cited here of this evil influence. In one of the lectures, as the author was facing a gathering of nearly 3,000 officers and men, he asked them the first question—"Do you want freedom of the country?" With one voice they replied, "No". He then put a second question—"Do you all feel as Indians?" With one voice they replied, "No, we are not Indians." This was really a staggering answer. He then enquired, if they were not Indians, then who they were. There was dead silence. Then he again asked who their parents were. There was absolute silence as the gathering had not been prepared beforehand to answer such questions. Then he enquired,

were the British their father and mother? Again there was pindrop silence. Then a senior N.C.O., who could not stand it any longer, came out of the gathering and spoke to the lecturer and said, "Sir, do not put us to shame any more. The men have all been tutored by the evil-intentioned officers in the Camp, and we have been told to answer in the way we have done. Please forgive us and continue with your lecture. We are Indians and we do want independence of our country." There were other instances where there was ample evidence to show that intensive counter-propaganda was carried on, particularly by some officers who were unpatriotic and who did their best to act against the cause of their country for their personal advantage. But inspite of all these anti-national influences, nearly 45,000 officers and men out of a total number of 60,000 Indian prisoners of war ultimately volunteered to join the Indian National Army. This shows a remarkable triumph of the national spirit. In order to keep the men in good spirits, spiritual lectures were given from time to time, games were encouraged, sing-song parties were held at times, and even dramatic performances were arranged occasionally. Physical training was enjoined on all who were in a fit condition to take it.

On the 1st September, 1942 the I.N.A. was formally established. The President of the Indian Independence League, Rash Behari Bose, promoted Capt. Mohan Singh, who was commanding the I.N.A., to the rank of a General. All British ranks were surrendered and new I.N.A. ranks were given to the persons concerned. Thus the senior-most officer became first a Second Lieutenant and then was promoted to higher ranks. The question of promotion was decided by the General Staff and the Military Secretary, and finally approved by Gen. Mohan Singh.

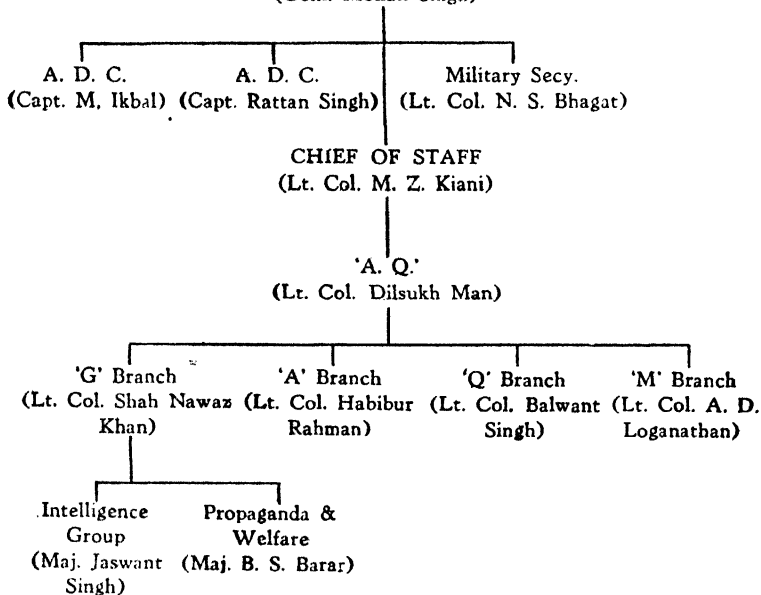
The Military Department, with almost all its Branches, was organized and established, such as General Staff, Adjutant-General's Branch, Quartermaster-General's

Branch, Medical Branch, Supplies Branch, Ordnance Branch, Intelligence Branch, etc., as shown diagrammatically in the charts No. I and II given below:

### CHART NO. I

(Showing the main organisation of the Supreme  
Command of the Indian National Army.)

GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING  
(Genl. Mohan Singh)



Units and Formations were also organized and established. These were as follows:—

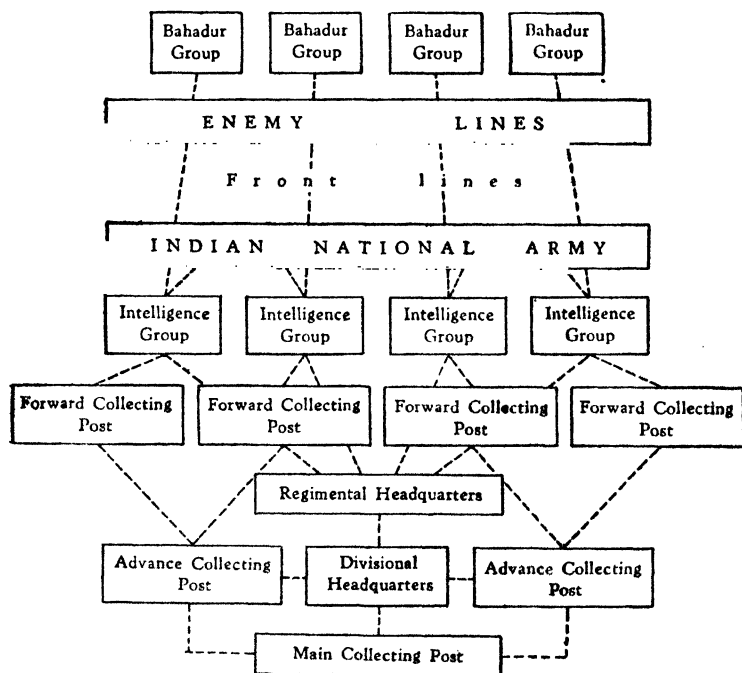
**No. I DIVISION:**—It was commanded by Lt.-Col. M. Z. Kiani, who had been G.S.O. III in the 3rd Corps of the British Indian Army in Malaya. It was proposed to raise, if possible, some more Divisions when agreement was arrived at with the Japanese military authorities, and equipment was available.

No. I Division consisted of:—

I. *Three Guerilla Regiments* which were named after important political leaders of India : (1) Gandhi Brigade, (2) Azad Brigade, (3) Nehru Brigade. Each Brigade consisted of three Battalions, and each Battalion consisted

CHART NO. II

(Showing the disposition of the BAHADUR & INTELLIGENCE Groups in the field).



of three Companies. These were to carry on war using guerilla tactics. They were to be attached to different Japanese Army formations but would be entirely under the command of their own officers. The Gandhi Brigade was

commanded by Lt.-Col. Inayat Kiani. The Azad Brigade was commanded by Lt.-Col. Prakash Chand. The Nehru Brigade was commanded by Lt.-Col. Aziz Ahmed, who had been Commander of the Kapurthala State Battalion in the British Indian Army.

II. *Field Force* :—This was commanded by Lt.-Col. J. K. Bhonsle, who had succeeded to the command of a battalion of Gharwalis just before the surrender of Singapore. This formation was the main Field Army and consisted of four Battalions.

III. *Armoured Vehicles Battalion* :—As the name signifies, this consisted of troops and armoured vehicles, but the latter contained only Bren-gun carriers.

IV. *Bahadur Group* :—This consisted of picked men who would be detailed in batches for making raids and doing sabotage work behind enemy lines and bringing back as much information and as many prisoners as possible.

V. *Intelligence Group* :—These men were specially trained for infiltrating deep behind the enemy lines for collecting information, spreading propaganda amongst the British Indian troops and the civil population, contacting revolutionary workers in India wherever possible, and for bringing back information.

VI. *Reinforcement Group* :—In this Group, the men who had volunteered to enlist in the National Army but were not directly absorbed in the Units that were formed, came in first and were sent out to the different Units, as reinforcements were required. Men who were old or were not fit for active service were also included in this Group to carry out work suitable for them, such as, work in the Base Depots, welfare, propaganda, educational etc.

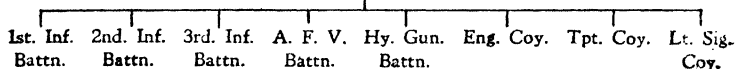
The Formations and Units are shown diagrammatically in Chart No. III:—

## CHART NO. III

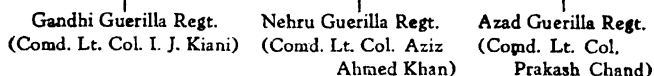
(Showing the main organization of the Formations and Units  
of the First I. N. A.)

## NO. I HIND FIELD FORCE GROUP

(Comdt : Lt. Col. J.K. Bhonsle) - Adjnt : Lt. Col. S.M. Hussain



## GUERILLA REGIMENTS



REINFORCEMENT GROUP  
(Comd. Maj. S. Malik)

BAHADUR GROUP  
(Comd. Lt. Col.  
Burhanuddin)

MEDICAL GROUP  
(HOSPITAL)  
(Comd. Lt. Col.  
Kulwant Rai)

**Badges**

(a) *Rank* : The following badges denoting rank were adopted for the I.N.A.:—

*Lance Naik*—

One small white cloth strip  $2'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$  worn horizontally over the outer side of the upper arm 3'' below the shoulder joint.

*Naik*—

Two small parallel white cloth strips  $2'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$  and  $\frac{1}{2}''$  apart, worn horizontally over the outer side of the upper arm 3'' below the shoulder joint.

*Havildar*—

Three small parallel white cloth strips  $2'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$  and  $\frac{1}{2}''$  apart from each other and worn horizontally over the outer side of the upper arm 3'' below the shoulder joint.

<b>Sub-Officer—</b>	Blue edging all round the shoulder epaulette.	
<b>Second Lieutenant—</b>	A single diamond-shaped star of dark blue cloth worn over the middle of the shoulder epaulette near its outer end with its points directed inwards and outwards.	} with blue edging all round the shoulder epaulette
<b>First Lieutenant—</b>	Two diamond-shaped stars of dark blue cloth worn over the middle of the shoulder epaulette near its outer edge with its points directed inwards and outwards, touching each other on the points.	
<b>Captain—</b>	Three diamond-shaped stars of dark blue cloth worn over the middle of the shoulder epaulette near its outer edge with its points directed inwards and outwards, touching each other on the points.	
<b>Major—</b>	One bar of blue cloth or woven thread $\frac{1}{4}$ " broad across the shoulder epaulette near its outer edge.	} with red edging all round the shoulder epaulette
<b>Lieutenant-Colonel—</b>	Two bars of blue cloth or woven thread $\frac{1}{4}$ " broad and $\frac{1}{2}$ " apart across the shoulder epaulette near its outer edge.	
<b>General—</b>	Two crossed swords of gold thread near the outer edge of the shoulder epaulette.	

(b) *Headgear*: A badge for the headgear was also adopted. It was the six-pointed Star of India in metal with a centre  $\frac{1}{3}$ " in diameter and enamelled blood red.

### **Pocket Money**

The following scales (approximately) of pocket money

in dollars were adopted for the different ranks of the army:—

Sepoy	..	9	dollars
L/NK	..	11	"
NK	..	15	"
Hav	..	20	"
S. O. II	..	40	"
S. O. I	..	50	"
Sec/Lt.	..	60	"
Lt.	..	80	"
Capt.	..	100	"
Maj.	..	120	"
Lt.-Col.	..	170	"
General	..	300	"

A fund was established for giving help to the incapacitated (either due to enemy action or disease). For this, voluntary contributions were invited from all ranks. But the response was poor.

### Training

Intensive training was started, both physical as well as spiritual.

*Physical Training:* In physical training, the men of all branches were put through regular physical exercises morning and evening. Scaling of walls, jumping across ditches, long marches, running long distances and playing of volley balls and other games were encouraged. Military men took to it with great enthusiasm and carried through the whole programme in scheduled time. Time was an important factor, as there was not enough of it before the campaign was to be started. In the I.N.A., irrespective of any distinction, all men were required to handle rifles and get suitable training. For this an extensive training programme was prepared and gone through for every soldier. Target practice was gone through for rifles, machineguns, and Bren guns.



All the words of command were formulated in Hindusthani and used in the training of the soldiers. This was a remarkable factor, as it was the first occasion in the history of an Indian Army that Hindusthani words of command were used solely, instead of English. The men could understand these words of command in Hindusthani much more easily, and the instructors could also give the orders with greater confidence and clearness than when they used English in the British Indian Army.

*Spiritual Training* :—It was a very important part of the training of a revolutionary soldier, as it was fully realised that no soldier could really fight for a cause unless he understood the significance of that cause and was imbued with the national spirit. Therefore, unless the men had the proper spiritual training, it would be difficult for them to undergo suffering and privations, and fight with an enemy far superior in number and much better equipped in military armaments, but the world's history teaches us that men in much smaller numbers, even when not properly equipped, can successfully overcome the enemy who possess much greater advantage in respect of number and equipment, provided the smaller force was compact, well-disciplined and spiritually superior to the enemy force. Accordingly, intensive spiritual training was imparted to every soldier and officer. They were made to realise the significance of their cause and the Movement for which they were fighting. They were given lectures on national history and geography and the political policy and development of their motherland. The numerous disadvantages of a subject race and the stranglehold which the British imperialists had got over the people of their country were explained to them. The urgent necessity of discarding all things—old manners, customs and traditions—which stood in the way of the fight for freedom was impressed upon them. They were told the full significance of unity, faith and sacrifice, which were the three basic principles adopted by the Indian Independence League and were exhorted

to adopt these three principles and bring them into use in their everyday life and in every deal they had with their fellow countrymen.

On account of lack of facilities and shortness of time, it was not possible to establish any training corps for officers or N.C.Os. Still a committee was formed to decide questions regarding promotions of officers and men. This was a very difficult, complicated and tedious task. Nevertheless, considerable success was achieved, and the persons concerned were satisfied.

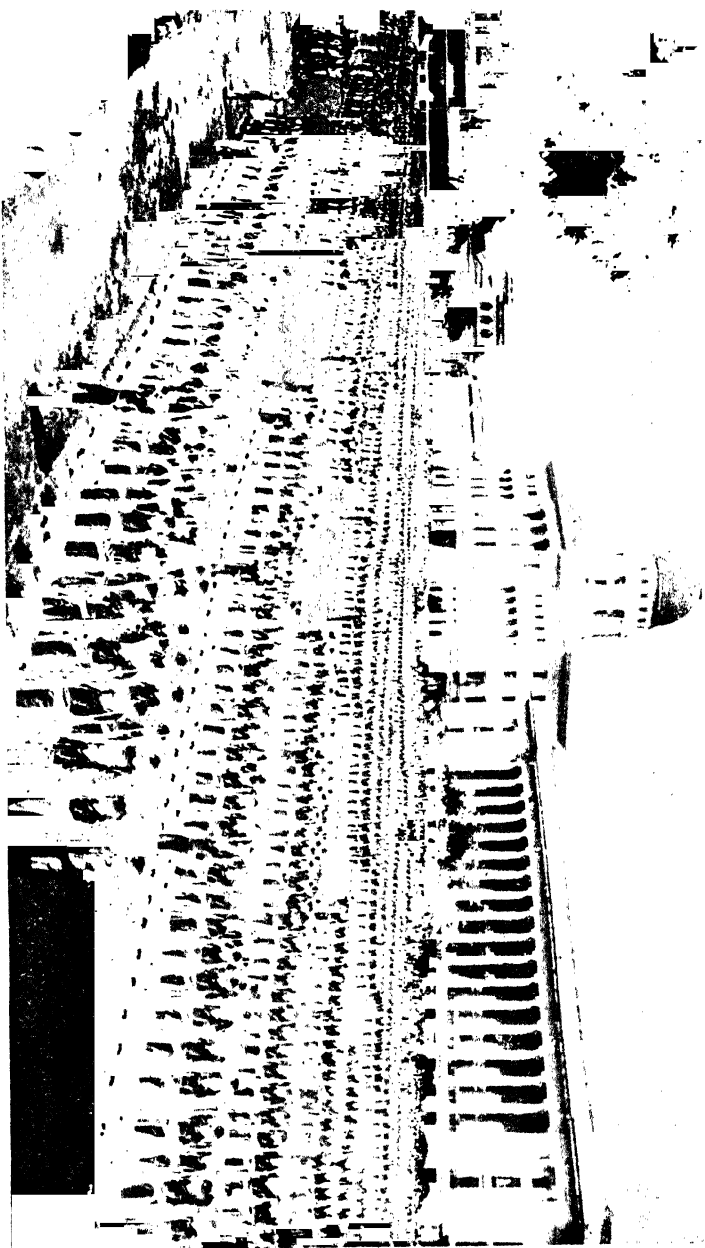
The formation of the Indian National Army, its organisation, and its training were entirely the work of the commissioned and non-commissioned Indian officers. Its formation gave the lie to the British calumny so often spread against the Indians for their lack of initiative, ingenuity, discipline, practical sense and power of organisation. Some features of the training of the Japanese soldiers, which were useful—for example, bayonet training and jungle warfare—were incorporated. The Japanese, on account of their long experience in China and South-east Asia, had specialized in these matters.

After carrying out the medical and economic survey, I returned to Singapore. I was told then that there was a lot of difficulties in getting medical equipment for the hospital of the Indian National Army. In particular, there was a great shortage of surgical implements. The Japanese were unable to supply either the instruments which we required, or the medicines, to an adequate extent. They could not even supply a sufficient quantity of anti-mosquito cream. I saw Gen. Mohan Singh and offered to help in this matter. He readily agreed and placed at my disposal a sufficient amount of money that might be required in this connection. Sardar Budh Singh and myself took up this matter together and we used to go to the Chora Bazar (evening markets) in Singapore and collected scalpels, scissors, forceps etc., and handed them over to Lt.-Col.

(now Maj.-Gen.) Lognathan who was then the D.M.S. of the I.N.A. In order to prepare anti-mosquito cream we purchased fairly large quantities of citronella oil, but a suitable diluent, such as cocoanut oil, and particularly one which would set firm and not easily melt away, was difficult to find. After making enquiries at several places and testing samples of fats of various kinds, I came across a factory which extracted oil from nuts imported from Borneo. This fat was whitish in colour and was solid at ordinary temperatures. It was tasteless and odourless. This, we were told, used to be sent to India as an adulterant to ghee. We mixed it with citronella oil. After some experiments, I found the proportions of the two ingredients of the mixture which set firm in ordinary temperatures. This was then put in small tin pots of 2 oz. capacity to be given to each soldier.

To celebrate the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi on the 2nd of October, a grand review of all the available troops (nearly 8,000) of the I.N.A. was held in the large maidan between the Singapore Municipal Building and the sea-beach. Gen. Mohan Singh stood at the foot of the Cenotaph (British War Memorial) and took the salute of the troops who marched past. It was a magnificent sight to see the well-formed ranks of the Indian troops, under the command of Indian officers, marching past in perfect formation. It was indeed a grand review and an enormous crowd of Indians, Malays, Chinese and Japanese witnessed this parade.

After a time the ashes of Capt. Akram Khan, which had been sent from Tokyo, arrived in Singapore. With due ceremony they were placed in a specially constructed grave in the Muslim crematorium in Bidadary. Gen. Mohan Singh and a large number of Hindu, Muslim and Sikh officers attended the solemn ceremony. They stood to attention with their heads bowed and observed two minutes' silence.



A view of the Military Parade held by General Mohan Singh on the Birthday of Mahatma Gandhi,  
in front of the Municipal Buildings, Singapore.



One morning early in November, 1942, I saw Gen. Mohan Singh. I spoke to him regarding the training of personnel required for civil administration of the areas in India after they were liberated by the I.N.A., and I submitted to him a short synopsis of the curriculum suitable for the training of these officers. He was highly pleased at the suggestion and said to me, "I have not sent you away from the Army and put you in the retired list. I want you to thoroughly master the civil and military administrations as I want to put you in charge of these when the time comes." This clearly showed that he realised the necessity of training such officers, otherwise there would certainly be confusion and the people of the liberated areas were bound to suffer.

Rash Behari Bose had established his headquarters in Bangkok. At this stage the principal department which he established there was that of Publicity and Propaganda. S. A. Iyer was put in charge and the Indian Independence League broadcasting station was established in the Bangkok wireless radio station. But after some time, he found it difficult to hold meetings of the Council of Action there, so he moved his headquarters to Singapore in Malaya. It was possible to hold the meetings of the Council of Action in Malaya more conveniently, but unfortunately differences of opinion began to increase and gradually it became very difficult of management. Rash Behari always tried to smooth out these differences, but as time went on he found it more and more difficult to reconcile the opposing elements.

A contingent of officers and men was sent by General Mohan Singh to Burma in 1942 to ascertain the conditions there and to return and report to him. They were also to make preliminary preparations for the reception of the I.N.A. when it moved there. In addition to this, a number of men were sent to the Imphal-Arakan fronts for infiltration work, so that contact might be established with the

units of the British Indian Army and with the civilian population behind the enemy lines and to penetrate, if possible, down to Calcutta in order to obtain a clear picture of the situation, and then bring back information and report. Lt.-Col. N. S. Gill and a few officers were to remain behind in Rangoon to watch the developments. For this purpose Lt.-Col. N. S. Gill, Major Mahabir Singh Dhillon and a number of other officers and men arrived in Rangoon about the 1st September, 1942. By the middle of October the party split up mainly into two parties, one proceeding to Akyab on the Arakan front and the other to Kalewa in the Chin Hills on the Imphal front.

The Kalewa party led by Major M. S. Dhillon went up to North Burma from Rangoon first by train and then by elephants, crossed the Chin Hills and surrendered to the British in that region. Major M. S. Dhillon was responsible for this. Before starting from Rangoon Major Dhillon took with him some other officers (Captains Balwant Singh, Ram Singh, Parab) also who had escaped from Malaya but had been captured in Burma on the pretext that they must form a group in his party and go with him. All of them deserted. It is interesting to note that one of the last-named three officers was fairly severely wounded in Singapore, but when he went to the Main British Hospital he was refused admission there. He had to seek admission in an Indian hospital.

The Arakan party went by steamer to Akyab, thence by boat up the Mayu River and then on foot. They were given shelter by a Muslim zemindar in a village in the Buthedong sector, but unfortunately as they were going to get into their boats for penetrating into India (*via* Cox's Bazar) they were surrounded and captured by the British Indian forces who must have received previously all the necessary information from those who had deserted under the leadership of Maj. M. S. Dhillon to the British. Later, a few persons did return, but the information gathered was

not at all encouraging. Later some more officers—Major (now Colonel) Gulzara Singh and others—came to Burma to study the situation carefully. On their return to Singapore they reported favourably on the situation, although some officers had previously reported the situation as unfavourable.

The Japanese up to this time had not clearly given out what the maximum strength of the Indian National Army would be. They agreed to the formation of the First Division with a strength of 10,000. The Council of Action had asked them to get the matter settled. The Japanese had replied that they had referred the matter to Tokyo and had been awaiting its reply.

---



## CHAPTER V

### THE SEEDLING SCORCHED

Differences of opinion, which had already arisen among the members of the Council of Action, were still further accentuated by the inability of the Japanese to come to an early decision. After a while the Japanese were again reminded to hasten the decision regarding (a) the maximum strength of the Indian National Army, (b) an authoritative public declaration regarding the future of India by the Prime Minister of the Imperial Japanese Government. Gen. Mohan Singh was anxious that the campaign for the liberation of India should be started as soon as possible. The Japanese again pleaded for time and they promised that they would get the matter definitely settled within two months. They said that communications were getting difficult, but the matter was so important that a complete understanding must be arrived at before any definite line of action could be taken. The Japanese gave the impression to some of us that they were hesitating to launch the campaign against India. At the time they did not mention the reason clearly, but later on, as will be described in this book, it was evident why they were hesitant. Gen. Mohan Singh and K. P. K. Menon, however, got impatient and sent in a note which amounted to an ultimatum, demanding a reply by the 23rd of December, failing which they would take independent action. Rash Behari Bose, President of the Council of Action, tried his level best to persuade them not to insist on a reply by the date specified by them. He undertook to go to Tokyo himself and promised that he would get within two months all that they had asked, including an authoritative public declaration by the Imperial Japanese Government with regard to India. But his persuasions and advice were not given heed to. A few of the senior officers also strongly

urged Gen. Mohan Singh not to take any hasty step that might lead to the immediate breaking up of the organisation, and advised him to wait for two months more, as the President of the Council of Action had asked them. Information was also received from Tokyo of the formation of four extra Guerilla Regiments, which meant an additional 12,000 men for the Indian National Army.

At this time another incident occurred. Lt.-Col. N. S. Gill, who had returned from Burma, had brought a confidential document which was really a report of the conversation between the Chairman of the Indian Independence League, Burma, and an officer—Col. Kitabe—who was the head of the Iwakuro Kikan (Japanese Liaison Office in Burma). The Chairman had reported to Col. Kitabe regarding certain disadvantages which the Indians were suffering in Burma, and in the course of discussion and argument, Col. Kitabe had suggested that the Indians should follow instructions given by the Japanese, to which the Chairman had retorted that that would amount to the Indians becoming puppets of the Japanese; to which, most unfortunately, Col. Kitabe had replied to the effect that it did not matter if the Indians there *did* act as puppets of the Japanese. This assertion should never have been made, as it showed tactlessness in negotiation and lack of administrative experience. Lt.-Col. N. S. Gill was arrested by the Japanese Military Police and taken into custody as he was accused of getting into communication with the British.

General Mohan Singh wrote a most unfortunate letter to the President of the Council of Action, and issued an order to the Army which he left in a sealed cover. In this order he wrote that if he was arrested the officers should dissolve the Army and destroy all documents. He also enjoined on the officers and men to take an oath not to join any Indian National Army if it were formed again. This action was beyond his powers, and was against the discipline of the Army. As a result, a very sad event occurred. He was arrested under the orders of the Presi-

dent of the Indian Independence League, reduced to the ranks, and kept under custody. It was a most unfortunate thing to happen.

Thus ended the first phase of the history of the formation of the I.N.A. for conducting the fight for the freedom of India. Along with Gen. Mohan Singh, K. P. Menon and Lt.-Col. G. Q. Gilani also resigned from the Council of Action. Thus only the President and N. Raghaban were left to carry on the Movement. The succeeding period of six months, that is, prior to the coming of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, was one of the most difficult periods in the history of the Indian Independence Movement in South-east Asia. Rash Behari Bose, helped by a few civilian members of the Indian Independence League, and a few of the senior military officers, tried his level best to keep the Movement alive, and he kept the Indian National Army from complete disintegration.

---

## CHAPTER VI

### REVIVAL AND STUNTED GROWTH

#### The Indian National Army

Rash Behari Bose deserves the greatest credit for his untiring energy and effort in reviving the Movement and re-forming the Indian National Army. As a matter of fact, it was this tremendous work that he had to undertake which ultimately led to the complete breakdown of his health and cut short his life.

In January, 1943 Rash Behari Bose prepared a questionnaire and all officers were asked to give a reply. The questionnaire included the enquiry whether they wanted to remain in the I.N.A. and, if not, to state their reasons and they were asked to see him. In February, Rash Behari Bose issued a statement analysing the replies he had received. He stated that he had carefully studied them and had found that very nearly all the officers were willing to remain in the Army in order to fight the battle of freedom for the liberation of the mother country, but he was sorry they were not unanimous. Those who did not want to do so could be classified into several categories: (i) those who were afraid to fight against the British, (ii) those who did not have full confidence in the Indian National Congress, (iii) those who supported the claim of 'Dominion Status' for India, and (iv) those who did not want to remain in the I.N.A. in the existing circumstances. If such opinions had come from the prisoners of war, one could understand. But when they came from the officers of the I.N.A. one began to question why at all they joined a Movement which was started for the achievement of complete independence of India.

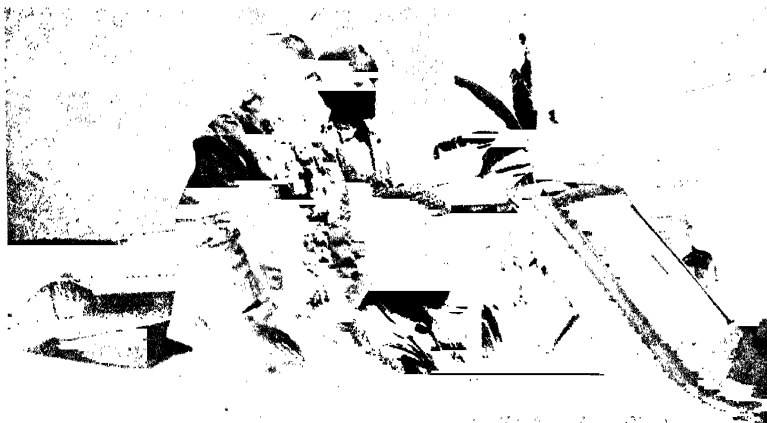
Rash Behari Bose published another statement in which he drew the attention of all officers to the tremendous pressure that was being put on Britain to quit India. India's fight for freedom against the British had reached

a crucial stage. There was no possibility of a compromise. Therefore our duty was clear. He was sorry he could not tell what was going to happen to those who wanted to go out of the I.N.A., for in that case he would have no control over them. He did not know what was in the minds of the Japanese authorities as to how they would employ them or where they would take them. They would be entirely in Japanese hands. Those who were not prepared to reconsider their decision to leave the Army must come to him and explain why they wanted to leave the Army. After that he would make arrangements to separate them.

A large number of officers went and saw him. Later on those who definitely did not want to remain in the I.N.A. were separated. They did not exceed more than eight, excluding the medicals who were allowed to remain in the Hospital Camps. Still a number of officers did not express their opinion freely. Of these some wanted to sabotage the Movement, others wanted to desert at the first opportunity, some had not made up their minds even then, while others were ready to join and fight, provided it was certain that a sufficient number of people would join the Movement. That this was the case became evident later on—a much smaller number of people actually joined than in the case of the first I.N.A., a few tried to sabotage while some actually deserted.

In order to revive confidence and faith among the officers and the rank and file of the I.N.A., a series of lectures and meetings were arranged, in several of which I had the honour to take part. Separate meetings were held for Officers, N.C.Os and men, and also joint gatherings. In the separate meetings, officers and N.C.Os and other ranks were given free latitude to ask any questions, and they could express any doubts they might have so that their questions could be answered and, if possible, their doubts removed. This had a very salutary effect on the troops. In one of these gatherings, Rash Behari Bose was questioned as to why he, being an Indian, had allowed his





Sri Rash Behari Bose, accompanied by Genl.  
Mohan Singh inspecting I. N. A. Troops.

Sept., '42.



Sri Rash Behari Bose shaking hands with Major Gen. Shahnawaz  
Khan and other Senior Officers of the Azad Hind Fauj.

Singapore, Sept., '42.

son to join the Japanese Imperial Army. He replied that he was hundred per cent Indian and he was second to none in his determination to achieve the independence of India from any foreign domination, but as he had to adopt Japanese nationality to escape the clutches of British Imperialism and because of his long exile in Japan, his son being born in Japan naturally became a Japanese subject, and therefore had to join the Japanese Army in accordance with the law of that country. But he was thoroughly convinced that when the time came, his son would join the Indian National Army and would raise his sword to fight the British who were keeping India enslaved. There was a great deal of ignorance and misunderstanding regarding Rash Behari Bose prior to this. But his frank statement cleared the atmosphere, revived confidence and removed doubt and suspicion about him. Various questions were asked regarding Gen. Mohan Singh's removal and the matter was explained frankly and freely by Rash Behari Bose and by many officers who knew the circumstances in which he had to be removed.

There were, however, certain facts, which only a few among the officers knew, about this most unhappy affair that could not be made public. There were strong elements, particularly amongst the officers who had joined the First I.N.A., either in order to secure important places for themselves, or in order to sabotage the Movement from within, or in order to have a comparatively easy life, and who were at this time definitely influenced by the adverse news which came from the Middle East regarding the defeat of the Axis Powers there by the British. These officers were now keen to get out of the Movement and were bent upon opposing the re-formation of the I.N.A. They put up all sorts of excuses. One senior officer went to the extent of saying that if the Movement was in sympathy with the Congress, then the Army should not fight; it should be completely non-violent. But when questioned why he had joined the First I.N.A., he could give no reply, nor could



he give a satisfactory one when questioned as to the duties of a warrior. S. C. Goho, a prominent advocate of Singapore and the then Chairman of the Indian Independence League, Singapore Branch, attended by request an important meeting of a large number of officers of the I.N.A. He explained very clearly the whole situation and answered several questions put to him. A large majority of the officers were satisfied by the explanation and the narration that he gave of the series of events leading to the situation as it was then. Similarly, meetings were held for the Indian public with a view to explaining to them the situation and re-establishing in them confidence and faith for the Movement.

I had the honour of speaking at one of these large gatherings in which, amongst other things, I clearly stated that we had joined the Independence Movement (i) as a matter of principle and not for the sake, or at the exhortation, of any particular man or leader. As long as our object was not fully achieved we must continue to struggle, no matter how many leaders might come and go. In this we should take a lesson from the West where the people followed more a Movement or a principle rather than the leader for the leader's sake. If we laid too much emphasis only on the personality of the leader, then as soon as the leader was gone the whole Movement would fail. This had very often happened in the East. I compared our struggle to a battle, where a general might be killed and others would follow, but the fight would go on, that is, if the army was well trained and disciplined; (ii) to free our country and not to exchange masters. There were several important Japanese military officers present at the gathering, and I told the audience in their presence that if the Japanese betrayed the confidence that we had in them, we would not hesitate to shoot them with the same rifle which we were going to use against the British, and if necessary, we would die to a man and not accept foreign domination.

These public meetings, conferences and lectures to the Indian troops had an excellent reviving effect. It brought back faith and confidence to a very large extent. Luckily in the early part of 1943, Premier General Hideki Tojo of Japan made a declaration in the Diet in which he categorically stated that Japan had no territorial, military, or economic ambitions in India. He further promised that Japan would give all out-aid to the Indian Independence Movement for the achievement of complete independence of India. But one factor came out quite clearly: the Army, particularly the officers, had become too much politically minded. For a revolutionary army it was perfectly natural that they should be revolutionary in spirit and should be prepared to carry out any task that was required of them, including the supreme sacrifice of their lives, for the achievement of their goal; but that did not mean that they should take active parts in politics and have different political opinions or different views regarding the measures that were being adopted for carrying on the Independence Movement. It was found necessary that this should be completely stopped if the Army were to be saved from being split up into party factions.

A conference was held with Col. Ivacuro, the head of the Ivacuro Kikan, the Japanese Liaison Office between the Indian and the Japanese officers, regarding the re-organization of the I.N.A. After some discussion, it was decided that such steps might be taken as would ensure that the Army would not come again under the control of any single individual. It was, therefore, decided to separate the actual Army Organization from the authority responsible for laying down its policy and directives. Accordingly, it was decided to establish a Military Bureau which would formulate the policies regarding training and operations. The Army was separated from it and consisted of a single Division for the time being, and four other Guerilla Regiments were to be organized. The re-organization is shown in the following chart Nos. IV, V, VI, VII and VIII :—

## CHART NO. IV

(Showing organisation of the Military Bureau)  
DIRECTOR OF MILITARY BUREAU,  
INDIAN INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE.

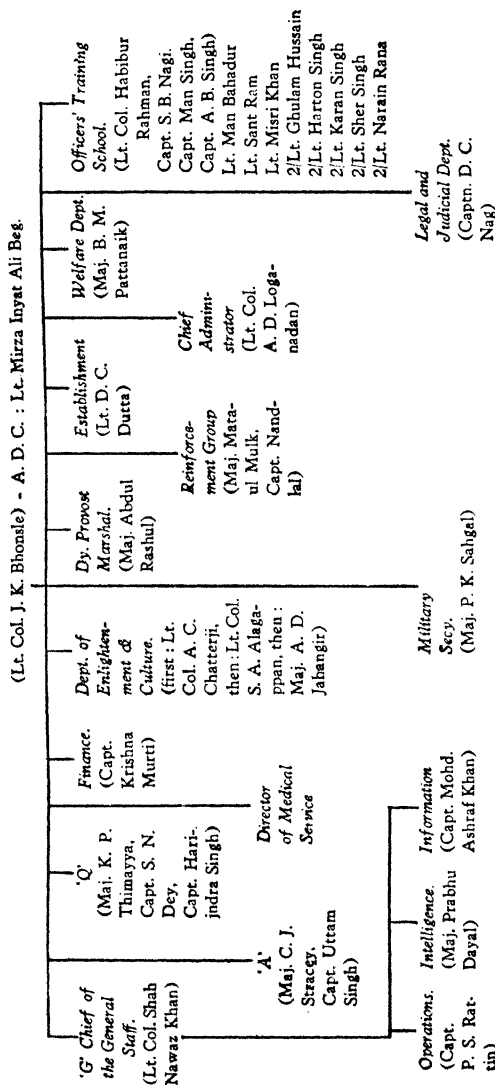


CHART NO. V

(Showing organisation of the Army)

— Army Commander —

(Lt. Col. M. Z. Khan) - A. D. C. : Lt. Abdul Majid.

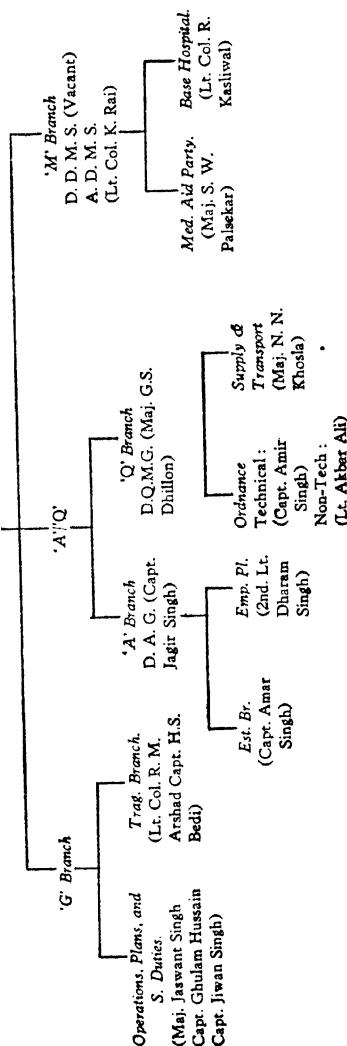
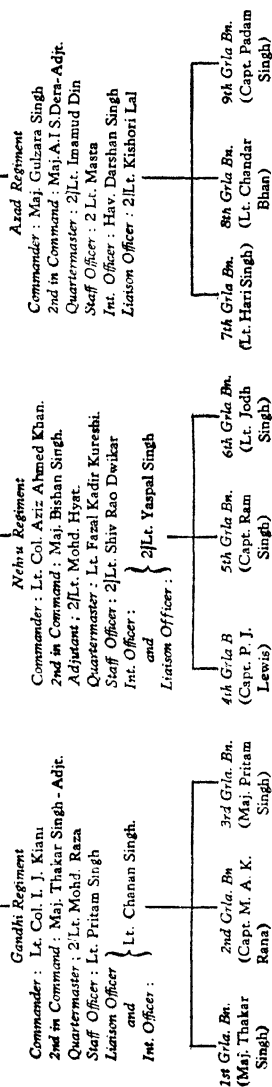


CHART NO. VI

(Showing organisation of the Guerilla Regiments)



## CHART NO. VII

(Showing organisation of the Intelligence Group)

## INTELLIGENCE GROUP

*Commander* : Maj. S. A. Malik*Staff Officer* : Lt. Harman Singh - Adj.*Quartermaster* : 2/Lt. Atma Singh.

<i>Interpreter</i> :	{	2/Lt. T. S. Wasan
		Hav. C. Basu
		2/Lt. S. K. Bannerjee .

*Sapper Officer* : 2/Lt. Mohd. Afzal.

\_\_\_\_\_

*Coy. Comd.*  
(Niwaz Khan)

\_\_\_\_\_

*Coy. Comd.*  
(Lt. Haq)

Lt.-Col. (now Maj-Gen.) M. Z. Kiani was appointed the Army Commander. Rash Behari Bose appointed an Administrative Committee consisting of five officers: Lt.-Col. Bhonsle, Lt.-Col. Loganadan, Lt.-Col. Ehsan Quadir, Lt.-Col. Prakash Chand, and Lt.-Col. Aziz Ahmed. The Administration Committee was directed to ensure the re-enlistment of all officers and men on an entirely voluntary basis. As strong counter-propaganda was going on against the formation of the Indian National Army, both in the Camps of the I.N.A. itself as well as amongst the prisoners of war, a large number of whom had already volunteered for joining in the First I.N.A. but had not been given the opportunity for formal enlistment, it was advised by some that officers should be kept apart from the other ranks in order to minimise the influence which they were exerting over the men against the re-formation of the I.N.A. Unfortunately this advice was not listened to, and as a result, only a total of 8,000 officers and men re-joined the

## CHART NO. VIII

(Showing organisation of Field Force Group)

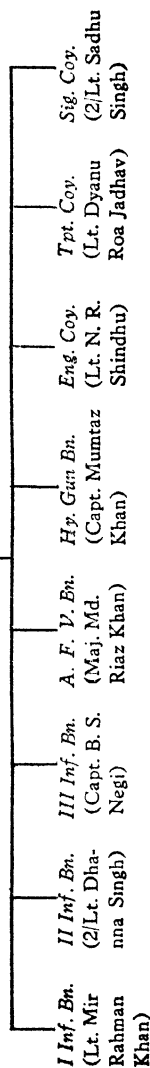
## NO. I HIND FIELD FORCE GROUP

*Commander*

(Lt. Col. S. M. Hussain)

'G' I : Maj. J. W. Rodrigues

'G' II : 2/Lt. Khushal Singh

*Adj't.* : Capt. B. S. Rawat*Asst. Adj't.* : Lt. Allahyar Khan*Q. M.* : Capt. M. G. Chhibar*Sapper Off.* : Sub Officer Ibrahim*Liaison Off.* : 2/Lt. Khushi Ram*Ordnance Officer* : —

I.N.A. which was newly formed, as against 45,000 who had volunteered to join the First I.N.A.

### MEDICAL BRANCH

It was a good thing that the Medical Branch was made a separate Branch instead of being tied to the apron-strings of the 'Q' Branch. The Medical Branch of the army has made remarkable strides in technique and field of operation. It was not what it was twenty years ago. It has developed many new divisions in the field of its activities and has expanded greatly. For its smooth and expeditious working it should be allowed to function on its own responsibility. It should no longer be put under 'Q' for administrative purposes. There are, however, items of work where medical officers should not be employed and thus a saving of such officers could be usefully effected. For example, the work of a Quartermaster and Transport Officer could be done quite as well by a non-medical officer as, if not better than, by a medical officer. I had pointed out these to the Army Headquarters in India (Medical Branch) before I left India in 1942. There are other spheres too, e.g., medical stores—at least the major part of the junior appointments.

Since my arrival in Malaya I had taken up and had stressed this matter upon the non-medical officers as opportunity arose. In the early stages they found it difficult to break the tradition but at last they realised that it was futile to stick to a wasteful precedent and allowed the 'M' Branch to function on its own responsibility.

### DEPARTMENT OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND CULTURE

In order to start an intensive educational campaign amongst the troops for spiritual, academic (Hindusthani, history, economics and simple arithmetic) and political education through lectures and leaflets, dramas and newspapers, a Department of Enlightenment and Culture was



established under Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji. After a time, when his services were lent to the Indian Independence League, the Department was put in charge of Lt.-Col. S. C. Alagappan, and later in charge of Maj. A. D. Jahangir. After a time the activities of the Department, as originally conceived and planned, were unfortunately greatly cut down and restricted. It was limited to publishing newspapers and propaganda bulletins and sometimes lectures were given.

#### WELFARE DEPARTMENT

Maj. Pattanaik was put in charge of this Department.

It was meant for looking after the general welfare of the troops and supply of extra comforts and necessities, particularly those of hospital patients and persons who were convalescing. It composed national songs and caricatures and arranged for the playing of patriotic dramas for the benefit of the troops.

#### THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE

In order to concentrate and intensify the work of the Indian Independence League, Rash Behari Bose brought down to Singapore the Headquarters of the League which had been left in Bangkok in charge of Ananda Mohan Sahay; only a small staff was left there to continue the broadcasting work. It was from the Bangkok radio station that wireless broadcasts were made for the first time about the Indian Independence Movement in South-east Asia under the direct control of the Indian Independence League. The Headquarters offices were established in Malcolm Road. A number of houses were taken over, renovated, and allotted to purposes of office, stores and residence of the staff and personnel. He established five Departments in charge of secretaries as mentioned below:—

- (1) Dept. of General Affairs—Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji.
- (2) Social & Welfare Dept.—D. M. Khan.

- (3) Intelligence Dept.—Deshpande Sahib.
- (4) Finance Dept.—Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji.
- (5) Housing & Transport, and Stores, were in charge of Assistants, but they were put under the control of the General Secretary.

As a rule the workers of the League were honorary workers. Most of them worked part-time and received small pittances as salary. This caused them hardships, there was confusion sometimes, proper discipline could not be maintained and as the work had increased it was considered necessary by Rash Behari Bose (i) that wholetime work should be the rule in the Leagues, (ii) that all those whose services were needed for wholetime work should be paid living wages so that they could maintain themselves properly. So radical changes were brought about in the cadre of League workers.

During this period, the civilian population, too, showed signs of dissatisfaction. This was largely due to two factors: (1) breaking up of the I.N.A. which they so enthusiastically supported and which they considered as their own; (2) the feeling of the necessity of the presence amongst them of a leader of all-India calibre who would guide and direct the Movement in a more dynamic manner. Therefore Rash Behari Bose called another joint conference in which representatives of the members of the Indian Independence Leagues in South-east Asia and the Military were to meet together, as he wanted (a) to apprise them of the facts relating to the situation that had arisen, (b) to clarify certain anomalous positions and (c) to take up certain new powers. This conference was held in Singapore in the main hall of the offices of the Indian Independence League, Singapore Branch, in April, 1943. Representatives of the I.N.A. as well as of the members of the Indian Independence Leagues sat in conference for two days, and the following important decisions among others were arrived at :—

(1) The President of the Indian Independence League was empowered (a) to nominate his successor, (b) to nominate the Chairman of the Territorial Committees of the Indian Independence League, (c) to suspend or postpone the holding of elections of office-bearers of the Indian Independence League in any Territory, (d) to make any laws or rules and regulations which he considered necessary for the intensification and efficiency of the work in connection with the Indian Independence Movement.

(2) The members of the Army were not to participate in any political activities.

(3) The Japanese authorities were to be asked to get a very prominent Indian leader for leading the Movement, and for this purpose efforts should be made to get Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, if possible.

During this conference a question was asked by one of the military representatives as to what would happen if the President did not act faithfully or select a suitable successor. Rash Behari Bose's reply was characteristic and at once showed his frank honesty, sincerity of purpose and typical revolutionary spirit. He said that the whole Movement was revolutionary and therefore, if the President failed in his duties and was unfaithful, he could be legitimately shot by his followers who had depended upon him. This frank and bold assertion of the President had a very satisfactory effect on the whole gathering.

Accordingly a request for bringing in Shri Subhas Chandra Bose from Germany to Malaya was again strongly urged. The Japanese agreed to forward this request immediately.

Rash Behari Bose considered the necessity of a wider and more accurate dissemination of news amongst the Indian population. He, therefore, arranged with the help of the Japanese authorities, and by negotiation with the Indian proprietors of certain newspapers, to take them over so that the policy of all these papers would be well informed, unified and consistent. S. A. Iyer, Secre-

tary, Publicity and Propaganda Department, saw the Indian proprietors, some of whom were in Kuala Lumpur and Penang, and completed these negotiations. The Japanese authorities handed over a part of the printing machinery and a large quantity of printing paper which they had taken over from the British enterprises. A large part of the Publicity and Propaganda Department from Bangkok was brought down to Singapore, and the Department was reorganized and greatly augmented. Sivaram, who was the spokesman of the Indian Independence League, was put in direct charge of editing the papers in Singapore. The following papers were printed and issued from Singapore under the auspices of the Indian Independence League: (1) English—*Voice of India* and *Azad Hind*; (2) Hindusthani—*Awaze Hind* and *Azad Hind*; (3) Tamil—*Swatantra Bharat*. There were two more papers, one from Kuala Lumpur and one from Penang.

An institution was established in Singapore under the direction of Lt.-Col. Ehsan Quadir, where instructors were trained for the purpose of imparting physical and spiritual training to Indian volunteers who came forward to undertake part-time or wholetime training in the different parts of Malaya. A large number of instructors were trained in this institution and they served a very useful purpose. Later on, when the demand for these instructors lessened, this institution was converted into a training institution for N.C.O's.

---

## CHAPTER VI

### ARRIVAL OF THE DYNAMIC FORCE

Political conditions in India in 1941 were such that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose had to leave his home and country. He had urged the proposal of presenting an ultimatum to the British to leave India, but the Congress had not accepted it. It would have been easier and more convenient for him to go to jail as the rulers of India were contemplating to incarcerate him, but that would have been for him to adopt the line of least resistance. That would not have been in the true interests of the country. He, therefore, decided to go abroad and see for himself what help he could get for the struggle for freedom of India. Seeking outside help for the liberation of one's own country was nothing new. America had sought it in her War of Independence against the British. Garibaldi had sought the help of the British for the liberation of his country. Why not India? In modern times there is not a single instance of any subject nation having obtained its freedom without the aid of a foreign power. That is why Netaji left his home and country. He left his home disguised as a Pathan and reached Peshawar. From there he reached Kabul after traversing most of the journey on foot through the tribal territory. In Kabul he tried to contact the Russians and wanted to go into that country, if possible. But he failed in his attempt because the Russians were at that time negotiating a treaty with the British. They did not want to give an excuse to the British for not concluding the treaty which was essential for the Russians who were sure that very soon a conflict between them and Germany was bound to arise. They, therefore, did not respond. Moreover, a few years previous to this the Cultural Association of the Soviet had asked Netaji to go to Russia, but unfortunately as he was ill at that time he

could not accept their invitation. Possibly this might also have offended the Russians. So when he failed to get into Russia, he contacted the Axis Powers in Kabul and ultimately reached Berlin through Moscow. After arrival in Berlin he met Hitler. One of the first things that he did there was to get Hitler to elucidate his references to the coloured peoples in his *Mein Kampf*. Hitler admitted that so far as India was concerned, his remarks were entirely based on information gathered from the British. But he realised that what he had written was wrong, and it has been reported that in subsequent publications of *Mein Kampf* in Germany the references regarding Indians were expunged.

On account of the failure of the African campaign and the campaign in Russia not working out according to schedule, the Germans had come to realise that their plans of coming to help revolutionary India to gain freedom for that country either through the Red Sea or through Persia would not materialise. The German authorities, therefore, agreed to accede to the request for despatching Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose from Germany to South-east Asia and Japan, and accordingly arrangements were made. Netaji, along with Swami and Abid Hassan (both now Majors in the I.N.A.), started from Germany in two submarines and took a most hazardous and perilous journey through the British minefields in the North Sea and the English Channel. They dodged the British and American patrol ships and reconnoitring aeroplanes. During the first part of their journey their movement on the surface was largely by night. By day they had not only to go completely submerged but sometimes had to rest on the bottom of the sea. For this reason it took nearly three months for them to reach Penang, from where Netaji flew first to Japan, where Rash Behari Bose was also with him. There Netaji had a full and frank talk with the Imperial Japanese Government and the Japanese Military Headquarters regarding the Indian Independence Movement and the launching of a campaign for the liberation of India.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose broadcast to his countrymen on 21st June, 1943, from Tokyo, and the following is an extract from his message:—

"To us, Indians, what is of primary importance is not what is happening in Tunis, Timbuctoo or in Lampedusa or Alaska, but what is happening inside India and across our frontier.

"Even the fall of Singapore and the loss of Burma, the greatest disasters in British military history, could not bring about any appreciable change. British Imperialism remains inexorable. Men may come and men may go, empires may come and empires may go, but British Imperialism goes on for ever—that is what our rulers continue to think.

"You may call it lack of statesmanship or political bankruptcy or midsummer madness. But this midsummer madness has its own explanation. The British Empire has grown out of India. The British people know, no matter to which political party they belong, that they need to reap all the resources of India. To them empire means India. They are now fighting madly to preserve that empire. It is midsummer madness to expect that the British will voluntarily give up the Indian Empire—the brightest jewel in the British crown. Consequently, no matter what fate besets Britain during the course of this war, the Englishman will endeavour to the very last to keep this empire—that is, to hold on to India.

"Therefore, if I may speak frankly, I would say that it is midsummer madness that British politicians refuse to recognise India's independence though they are in a terrible plight; it is midsummer madness that we should expect the Englishman voluntarily to give up his empire. No Indian should ever cherish the illusion that one day England will be induced to recognise India's independence. But that is not to say that British politicians will never again compromise with India. Personally, I expect another such attempt some time this year. But what I want to point out to my countrymen is that by compromise the British

politicians will never recognise India's independence, but will only try to bluff the Indian people.

"Protracted negotiations are planned to sidetrack the campaign for independence and thereby undermine the national will, as they did between December, 1941 and April, 1942. Therefore, we should once and for all give up hope of any compromise with British imperialism. Our Independence admits of no compromise. Freedom is only won when the British and their allies quit India for good. And those who really want liberty must fight for it and pay for it with their own blood.

"Countrymen and friends! Let us, therefore, carry on the fight for liberty inside India and outside India, with all our strength and vigour. Let us continue the battle with unshakable faith till the day that British Imperialism will be broken up and out of its ashes India will once again emerge an independent nation. In this struggle there is no going back and there can be no faltering. We must march onward and forward till victory is achieved and freedom won.

"Some of my countrymen have been expecting that under the pressure of an international crisis the imperialistic Powers like Britain might be induced to recognise the independence of enslaved countries like India, but all such expectations have been completely misplaced.

"You are aware that towards the end of 1940, since I saw that Mahatma Gandhi had at long last launched the civil disobedience campaign, I felt that the honour and prestige of Indian people had been vindicated, and it was necessary to plan the Indian Revolution on a larger scale and in an effective manner in order to bring it to fruition. Today I am in a position to announce to you that all these objectives have been fully achieved. We know the internal situation at first hand and we are, therefore, convinced of our ultimate victory.

"All Indians outside India who are not living in countries directly under the control of our enemies have now been



brought together into one well-built organisation. They are following closely the developments inside India and on the other hand keeping unimpeded contact with international events. They are making all possible preparations to bring at the right time the maximum assistance to you who have been carrying on the struggle at home inspite of internment, persecution and brutality.

"Friends! you may remember that I have in the past assured you more than once that when the hour strikes, I and many others like myself will be by your side to share the glory of fighting and suffering side by side and share with you the joy of victory as well. We are now fulfilling that pledge.

"India shall be free and before long. And a free India will throw open the prison gates, so that her worthy sons may step out of the darkness of the prison cells into the light of freedom."

Intimation was then received in Singapore that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was arriving there from Tokyo. He arrived by aeroplane on the 2nd July, 1943, and landed at the civil aerodrome at Kalang, Singapore. He was met there by the leading Indian civilians and the senior military officers of the Indian National Army, and profusely garlanded. He then drove straight to his house which was located in Gelang, Singapore, and was re-equipped and re-furnished. He had a preliminary conversation with the local Japanese Military Staff on that and the following day. Prominent local Indians came and paid their respects. On the 4th there was a great gathering of Indians in the large auditorium of the cinema hall in the Cathay Building. Representatives of the Indian Independence League had come from all over South-east Asia to welcome Netaji and to attend this meeting. Rash Behari Bose first addressed the gathering and said that he had promised them that he would definitely bring something from Tokyo. He had brought a present for them. He then introduced Netaji to the people and handed over charge of the presidentship of

the Indian Independence League to Netaji. When Netaji rose to speak, he received a tremendous ovation from the people. All men and women stood up and cheered him continually for minutes together. Taking over leadership, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose assured the people that he would do his utmost to guide the Movement on correct lines. He said:

"Friends! The time has now come for freedom-loving Indians to act. Action in a war crisis demands, above all, military discipline, as well as unflinching loyalty to the cause. I, therefore, call upon all my countrymen in East Asia to line up in one solid phalanx and prepare for the grim fight that is ahead of us. I am confident that they will do so. I have publicly declared several times that when I left homeland in 1941 on an important mission, it was in accordance with the will of the vast majority of my countrymen. Since then, despite all restrictions imposed by the C.I.D., I have remained in constant touch with my countrymen at home.

"Patriotic Indians abroad have been working as genuine trustees of the fighters for freedom at home. I can assure everybody once again that whatever we have done up till now or may do in future has been and will be for the freedom of India, and we shall never do anything that is either against the interests of India or will not be in accordance with the will of our people. In order to mobilise all our forces effectively I intend organising a Provisional Government of Free India. By winning freedom through our own efforts and sacrifice, we shall be acquiring the strength whereby we shall preserve our liberty for all time. I warn you that though we are absolutely sure of our final victory, we can never afford to underestimate the enemy, and we should even be prepared for temporary setbacks. We have a grim fight ahead of us for the enemy is at once powerful, unscrupulous and ruthless. In this final march to freedom, you will have to face hunger, thirst, privation, forced marches and death. Only when you pass

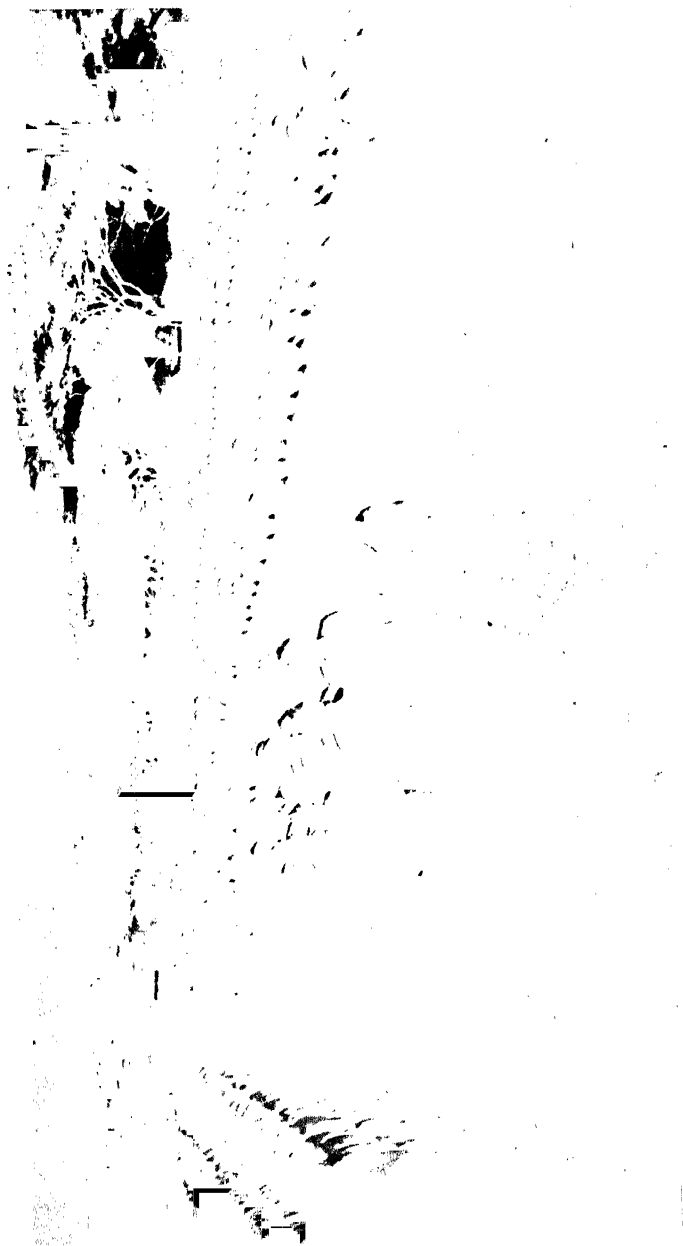
this test will freedom be yours. I am confident that you will do so and thereby bring freedom and prosperity to your enslaved and impoverished land. I will not spare myself in any way and will gladly undergo any suffering and will sacrifice my life, if necessary, in service of my Motherland." The hall was packed to capacity and there was an overflowing crowd outside the Cathay Building. There was quite a large number of women in the audience.

On the 5th July Netaji held a review of the contingents of the Indian National Army on the Maidan in front of the Municipal Buildings. A large platform had been specially constructed covering over the whole of the grand stairs in front of the Municipal Buildings. Right in front, in the middle of the platform was erected a rostrum which was nicely decorated. Netaji addressed the gathering from this rostrum. He spoke in Hindusthani, which thrilled the audience. The troops as well as the people who had gathered to see the review cheered him immensely when he rose to address them.

He said in effect: "Soldiers of India's Army of Liberation! Today is the proudest day of my life. Today it has pleased Providence that I have the unique honour of announcing to the whole world that India's Army of Liberation has come into being. This army has now been drawn up in military formations on the battlefield of Singapore, which was one day the bulwark of the British Empire. It is in the same Singapore that this Army has been organised. This is the Army that will not only liberate India from the British yoke, but after that it will also form the nucleus of the Indian National Army. This army is India's own. Every Indian will feel proud that this Indian Army has been organised entirely under Indian leadership and that when the historical moment arrives, under Indian leadership it will go into battle.

"There was a time when people thought that the sun never set over the British Empire, that it was everlasting. But this idea never bothered my mind. I have learnt this





Netaji accompanied by Staff Officers inspecting I. N. A. Troops.

July, '43.

from history that in course of time every empire declines and every empire falls. I have seen with my own eyes that those cities and fortresses which were once impregnable have been in course of time converted into the graveyards of that empire. Standing on this graveyard of the British Empire, even a child's mind will be firmly convinced that the almighty British Empire is a thing of the past. In 1939, when France declared war against Germany and the war started, then on the lips of every German soldier there was only one cry, 'On to Paris!' 'On to Paris!' When in December, 1941, the brave Nippon soldiers started their march, then they had on their lips only one cry, 'On to Singapore!' 'On to Singapore!' Friends! Soldiers! Let your battlecry be 'Chalo Delhi!' 'Delhi Chalo!'

"I cannot say today how many of us will survive till the end of this fight for freedom. But this much I know for certain that in the end it will be our victory and until our brave soldiers who survive enter as victors that ancient Red Fort of Delhi, another graveyard of the British Empire, our work will not be completed.

"In my political life I have always thought that although India is prepared for Independence in every way, still she felt the want of an army of liberation. George Washington could fight and win freedom because he had his army. Garibaldi could liberate Italy from the clutches of the enemy because he had the support of his armed volunteers behind him. It is your privilege and honour to be the first to come forward and sacrifice yourselves in forming the Indian National Army. It is you who have removed the last barrier on the road to freedom of your country. You can feel happy and proud on being the pioneers of this noble work.

"Before you there are two duties. By arms and with your blood you will have to win the independence of your country. After winning freedom, it is you who will have to form the permanent army of Independent India. The duty of maintaining the independence of India for ever will devolve only on this army. National Defence will have to

be built up on such firm foundations that it may never be in danger again.

"As soldiers you will have to adopt and carry out the threefold ideals of Faith, Discipline and Sacrifice. The members of an army who always remain faithful to their nation, who fulfil their duties under all circumstances, and who are always ready to sacrifice their lives are invincible. If you, too, desire to be invincible, then engrave these three things in the innermost of your heart. For a real soldier both military and spiritual training is necessary. All of you should train yourselves as well as your comrades in such a way that every soldier has self-confidence, is alive to the fact that he is more powerful than the enemy, is fearless in facing death, and at a critical moment is able to act on his own initiative. You have seen in this war what man may achieve with scientific training, courage, fearlessness and vital power. In order that you may be able to build up a first-class modern army for Bharatmata, learn all the lessons from those examples.

"Those of you who are officers, their responsibilities are very great. In the present world, although the responsibilities of the officers of every army are great, for India its importance is still greater. The reason for this is that we are slaves. We have no historic tradition like that of Mukden, Port Arthur, or Sedan to inspire us. Many things which the British have taught us, we will have to forget and many things which the British have not taught us we will have to learn. Whatever may happen, it is my firm conviction that you will prove your capacity to fulfil the responsibility which the countrymen have placed on you. Remember that mainly because of the inefficiency of the officers the British have lost in so many battlefields. Remember also that from amongst you will be formed the future General Staff of Free India. Today I want to tell you all that you will have to gain such experience and success in this war as will provide us with the foundation on which our future military traditions will grow up. An



Netaji taking the Salute    Armoured Cars marching past





army which does not possess courage, fearlessness, and invincibility as a background—that army cannot defend itself against a powerful enemy.

“Friends! A nobler work than the responsibility you have voluntarily taken up today cannot be imagined for man. Because in the fulfilment of that duty sacrifice of no interest can be considered too great, not even the sacrifice of one’s life. Comrades! today you are the custodians of India’s National honour and the embodiment of India’s hopes and aspirations. Conduct yourselves so that your countrymen may bless you and posterity may be proud of you.

“I have already said before that today is the proudest day of my life. There cannot be anything more honourable, anything to be more proud of for an enslaved nation than to be the first soldier of its army of liberation. But along with this honour there is a responsibility also. I am extremely conscious myself of this responsibility. I want today to give you this assurance that I shall be with you in darkness and in sunshine, in sorrow and in joy, in suffering and in happiness.

“For the present I can offer you nothing except hunger, thirst, suffering, forced marches and death. But if you always follow me in life as well as in death, then I will lead you on to the road to victory and freedom. It does not matter who amongst us shall live to see India free. It is enough that India shall be free and that we shall give our all to make her free. May God now bless our Army and grant us victory in the coming fight! Inquilab Zindabad! Azad Hind Zindabad!”

On the 6th July he again reviewed the troops along with the Premier, Gen. Hideki Tojo, who had arrived from Japan to inspect South-east Asia. Both of them received a tremendous ovation. Netaji as well as Premier Tojo addressed the gathering. The latter repeated his former declaration which he had made in Japan earlier in the year that (i) Japan had no territorial, military, or economic

ambitions in India, (ii) India would achieve complete independence, free from any foreign domination, (iii) Japan promised all-out aid to the Indian Independence Movement.

A few days later, a big luncheon party was given to Netaji by the Indian community of Singapore in the Cricket Club at which not only Indians, but also high-ranking Japanese military officers were present. In addressing the gathering, Netaji explained the significance of the Indian Independence Movement which aimed at the liberation 388 millions of Indians. He said that this struggle could only succeed if Indians could all think and act together as one person. He emphasised the need for the evolution and adoption by Indians of common items in their daily life which would be helpful in the unification of India; for example, there were such variations even in greetings and salutations when two Indians met each other. When two Indians met, they either greeted each other according to their denomination or creed, or exchanged greetings in English as if to utter words in Hindusthani was either shameful or so antagonistic to each other that they could not find a common ground. It was here that Netaji suggested the greeting *Jai Hind*, which would not only be non-denominational but gave a definite patriotic impetus to the unification and glory of India. He suggested that these simple words could be used by Indians not only when they met each other, but also when corresponding or writing letters. "Jai Hind" from thereon got on like magic amongst the Indians. It was immediately adopted both by the civilians as well as the military, and later it was even adopted in all official correspondence.

On the 9th there was a mass rally of Indians in the same Maidan in which the troops of the I.N.A. also participated. In this rally all the Indians of Singapore and a large number of Malays and Chinese had also gathered. The Indian crowd alone numbered over 60,000. When Netaji rose to speak there was deafening cheering from the crowd and he received a tremendous ovation. On the huge plat-

form over the grand stairs in front of the Municipal Buildings, along with Netaji sat his principal officers of the Indian Independence League and the Azad Hind Fauj. He addressed the gathering in Hindusthani.

He said: "Brothers and Sisters! I first of all offer my heartfelt thanks to you for the honour you have done me today in according me this reception. I am particularly grateful to my sisters who, to show their patriotism, are present here in such large numbers. From what I have seen today I am firmly convinced that my brothers and sisters of Shonan and Malaya are going to take a very creditable part in the coming struggle. What was at one time a bulwark of British imperialism has now been turned into a fortress of Indian Nationalism.

"I would like to tell you now quite frankly what made me leave my home and homeland on a journey fraught with danger of every kind. I was lodged safely in a British prison, when I silently resolved to risk everything in the attempt to escape from the clutches of the British. Having been in prison eleven times, it was much easier and much safer for me to continue there, but I felt that the cause of India's independence demanded a journey abroad, regardless of the risk that it involved. It took me full three months of prayer and meditation to decide if I had strength enough to face death in fulfilling my duty. Before I could slip out of India, I had to get out of prison, and in order to do so, I had to go on hunger-strike, demanding my release. I knew that neither in India nor in Ireland had a prisoner succeeded in forcing the British Government to release him. I knew also that Terence MacSweeney and Jatin Das had died in the attempt to force the Government's hands. But I felt convinced that I had an historic task to fulfil. So I took the plunge, and after seven days of hunger-strike the Government unexpectedly got unnerved and set me free, with the intention of taking me back to prison again after a month or two. But before they could seize me again, I became a free man.

"Friends! You know that I have been actively working in the independence movement ever since I left the University in 1917. I have been through all the Civil Disobedience campaigns during the last two decades. In addition to this, I have been repeatedly put in prison without trial, on the suspicion of having been connected with secret revolutionary movements—whether non-violent or violent. It will be no exaggeration at all to say that no other national leader has been able to gain the varied experience that I have been able to get. In the light of this experience, I came to the conclusion that all the efforts that we could put forward inside India would not suffice to expel the British from our country. If it were at all possible to win independence by internal agitation, then I would not have devoted myself to this hazardous task unnecessarily. To put it briefly, therefore, my object in leaving India was to supplement from outside the struggle going on at home. It will not be possible to win the freedom of India without external aid. On the other hand, the supplementary help from outside which the national struggle at home so urgently needs is in reality very small. But on account of the defeats of the British at the hands of the Axis, British power and prestige today have gone down so much that our work has become comparatively easier.

"The help that our countrymen at home needed and still need is a twofold one: moral and material. Firstly, they have to be morally convinced that their victory is assured. Secondly, they have to be given military help from outside. In case of the first item, we will have to consider what will be the outcome of the war taking into view the international conditions. With regard to the second, we will have to consider how best the Indians living abroad can help their fellow countrymen and, if necessary, whether it is possible to obtain any help from the enemies of British Imperialism. Friends! I can tell you that we have been successful in achieving both these objectives.

"As a result of my travels I have been able to see things for myself and have been able to judge the military capacity of the fighting Powers. When I was able to believe in the certainty of defeat of the Anglo-American powers, I informed my countrymen. I have seen that no matter in which part of the world my countrymen may live, they have become conscious of their conditions and are anxious to take part in the national struggle. I feel happy to see that the Axis Powers are eager for the independence of India. They are ready to offer the fullest help if the Indians want it. Among those Indians who live outside India there is no one who is not keen for the achievement of freedom for India or is not eager to help in the national struggle. If anyone feels the slightest doubt about the intentions of the Axis Powers, then I can very easily convince him by several proofs that amongst those who are outside our country the Axis are our best friends. Apart from this, I ask you to have faith in me. Even my enemies will not have the audacity to say that I can injure the interests of my country. If the British Government itself have not been able to destroy my determination, or to deceive me, or to tempt me, then no one else can do so.

"You believe my word. If you want any help from any outside Power to fight against British imperialism, then the Axis Powers would help you. But whether you need any help or not you will decide yourselves and it would undoubtedly be the best policy if we could achieve the freedom of our country without any help. In this connection however I want to mention this, that if the almighty British Government can go round the world for help with a beggar's bowl in hand, and can ask for help even from India although she is shackled with the chains of slavery and is reduced to penury as a result of exploitation, then it is not a matter of shame for us to ask for help from outside Powers.

"The time has come when I can openly tell the whole world, including our enemies, how it is proposed to bring

about national liberation. Indians outside India, particularly in East Asia, are going to organise a fighting force which will be powerful enough to attack the British Army in India. When we do so, a revolution will break out, not only among the civil population at home, but also among the Indian Army which is now standing under the British flag. When the British Government is thus attacked from both sides from inside India and from outside—it will collapse, and the Indian people will then regain their liberty. According to my plan, therefore, it is not necessary to bother about the Axis Powers' intentions towards India. If Indians outside and inside will do their duty, it is possible for the Indian people to throw the British out of India and liberate 388 millions of their countrymen.

"Friends! let the slogan of the three million Indians in East Asia be 'Total Mobilisation for a Total War.' Out of this total mobilisation, I expect at least three hundred thousand soldiers and thirty million dollars. I want also a unit of brave Indian women, to form a death-defying regiment, who will wield the sword the way the brave Rani of Jhansi wielded in India's First War of Independence in 1857.

"There are many who will say that if 388 millions of Indians cannot drive away the British from India, then how will only 3 millions of Indians be able to do so? But friends! look at the history of Ireland. If three million Irishmen practically living under martial law could bring down the British Government to its knees in 1921 with the help of only five thousand armed Sinn Fein volunteers, then why should not 3 million Indians hope to be able to drive away the British when there is a strong movement going on in India? But the fact is that for this the Indians living abroad, particularly those living in South-east Asia, will have to devote all their energies. For this purpose I would like to establish a Provisional Government of Free India. The duty of this Government will be to mobilise all the resources of the Indian people and fight against the British Army in

India. When India becomes free, then this Provisional Government will clear the way for the establishment of a Permanent Government according to the will of the Indian people.

"Friends! you must realise that the time has come for the mobilisation of men and money of the three million Indians of South-east Asia. You cannot work unless you put your heart and soul into it. I want total mobilisation of men and money. Nothing short of that will do, for we have heard all along, and our enemies have also proclaimed, that this war is a total war.

"Today you are seeing in front of you the Indian National Army—a part of the army of liberation of India. They paraded the other day in front of the Town Hall. After that they have taken the oath that they will not rest until they have paraded as victors in front of the Red Fort of Delhi. Today their slogan is *Chalo Delhi!*

"Friends! We have heard for a long time of the formation of a second front in Europe. But our countrymen at home, too, are being hard pressed, and they are demanding a second front. Give me total mobilisation in East Asia and I promise you a second front, a real second front for the Indian struggle."

Netaji spoke for over two hours. Rain fell in torrents, but men and women listened to him with rapt attention. They cheered him over and over again. They were thoroughly drenched, and yet not a single man, woman, or child moved. Young and old, all remained soaked in rain until his speech was finished. Then they repeatedly shouted with joy—*Inquilab Zindabad, Azad Hind Zindabad, Netaji Ki Jai.*

A deputation of the Sikhs waited upon Netaji in connection with the release of Sardar Mohan Singh from custody. They wanted to get him released and put in charge of the army again; but if that could not be done, he might be released as a civilian. Netaji gave them a very patient hearing and talked to them very sympathetically



but frankly. He told them that as the circumstances were, he could not get him released at once, but he would constantly bear the point in mind and would get him released at the earliest possible opportunity. The deputation was not happy, but went back satisfied. It was Netaji's intention to get Sardar Mohan Singh released as soon as the Provisional Government of Free India got a firm foothold in the liberated areas in India and then make him a Minister of State.

## CHAPTER VII

### VIGOROUS GROWTH AND EXPANSION

Soon after the settlement of the preliminaries in Singapore, Netaji went to Rangoon on the invitation of Dr. Ba Maw to participate in the celebration of the establishment of the first Independent Government of Burma under the leadership of Nangyundaw Adipadi Dr. Ba Maw. He made the necessary courtesy calls on the Adipadi and Madam Ba Maw, General Ida, the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Forces and the Japanese Ambassador to the Burmese Government. Dr. Ba Maw and the Burmese Government promised all help in the coming campaign for the liberation of India for, they said, they fully realised that as long as India remained enslaved, Burmese Independence could not last long. Therefore they said that the destinies of the Burmese and the Indian peoples were interdependent. Hence they promised every help for the coming fight for freedom of India.

While in Rangoon Netaji took the opportunity of visiting the tomb of Emperor Bahadur Shah, the last Emperor of India. He held a parade on the 26th July, 1943, of all the contingents of the Indian National Army that were present in Rangoon. Thousands of civilian Indians and Burmans also gathered there. Netaji placed a beautiful large wreath on the Emperor's tomb. He faced towards India and made a feeling oration over the tomb and was seen visibly moved while doing so.

The following is an extract from his speech:

"It is perhaps strange, maybe a lucky coincidence of history that while the remains of India's last Emperor rest on the soil of Burma, the remains of the last king of Free Burma now rest on the soil of India.

"We express our unshakable determination before a sacred memorial, before the mortal remains of the last

fighter for India's freedom, the man who was an emperor among men and a man among emperors. Now when we are engaged in the last war for India's independence, it is all the more necessary for us to renew our unshakable determination to fight this last war for independence to a finish, regardless of all sufferings and sacrifices, regardless of all difficulties in our path, regardless of the length of this war so that at long last the enemy, the common enemy of Burma and India, will be finally overthrown and we will be free not only within our homes, but free as comrades marching shoulder to shoulder fulfilling the common destiny of mankind." He appealed to his people to unite and carry out the commands and wishes of India's last Emperor to drive out the British from India and thus regain India's freedom. He remembered the famous saying of the Emperor, who was also a poet of renown under the pen name of Jafar:—

*"Gazion men boo rahegi jab talak imaki*

*Takht London tak calegi tegh Hindusthanki."*

(As long as the last particle of faith exists in the souls of India's freedom fighters, the sword of India shall continue to penetrate the heart of London.—*free translation*).

He said that to achieve this, Unity, Faith, and Sacrifice were essential. The gathering, both civilians and military, was thrilled with his speech and gave him thundering cheers. Netaji made a donation of two lacs of rupees to the new Independent Government of Burma as a token of goodwill of the Indians towards the new Independent Government of the Burmese people.

### **Indian Independence League**

After returning from Burma, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose started re-organizing the Indian Independence League. He re-organized the activities of the League and in its Headquarters established 11 Departments, each in charge of a Secretary as mentioned below :—

- (1) DEPT. OF GENERAL AFFAIRS:—Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji, General Secretary.
- (2) PUBLICITY & PROPAGANDA:—S. Iyer.
- (3) FINANCE:—Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji.
- (4) EDUCATION:—J. Thivy.
- (5) SOCIAL WELFARE:—D. M. Khan.
- (6) HOUSING & TRANSPORT:—D. M. Khan.
- (7) WOMEN'S DEPT.:—Dr. (now Lt.-Col.) Laxmi Swaminathan.
- (8) SUPPLIES:—*first*: Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji, *later*: Hardyal Singh.
- (9) RECRUITMENT:—Maj. B. M. Pattanayak.
- (10) TRAINING:—Lt.-Col. Ehsan Quadir.
- (11) INTELLIGENCE:—*first*: Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji, *later*: Satyamohan Sahay.
- (12) RECONSTRUCTION:—A. N. Sarkar.
- (13) CEYLON DEPT.:—Kotlawala.

(1) *Department of General Affairs:*

All matters of general administrative policy and executive action, and all matters not dealt with specifically by other departments, were dealt by this department. This department co-ordinated the work of the other departments in relation to each other, and was the liaison department with respect to contacting outside authorities, particularly the Japanese military authorities and the local authorities. This department was greatly augmented in view of the increased amount of work.

(2) *Publicity & Propaganda Department:*

This department controlled several newspapers, arranged for the publication of books, pamphlets, posters, leaflets, etc. This department controlled the local radio station of the Indian Independence League in Singapore. It was greatly augmented on account of the increased amount of work. It employed artists and arranged slogan competitions.

### (3) *Finance Department:*

This department was completely re-organized and had two main branches, Accounts and Audit. The Cash department was included under the Accounts branch. Double entry and voucher system were introduced. Bills were paid by pre-auditing, in order to expedite their payment. Budgets were framed for every department, although these had to be very elastic on account of the circumstances in which the work was carried out. The departments largely worked on block allotments. Arrangements were made for auditing important League branches in the different areas.

### (4) *Education Department:*

This department arranged for the establishment of national schools and preparation of curricula for them. In these schools, Indian National History, the political progress and the struggle for the freedom of India, Geography, particularly of India and Asia, and Hindusthani were among the subjects taught. Physical and spiritual training were special features of the pupils and staff belonging to the schools.

### (5) *Social Welfare Department:*

This department was responsible for making arrangements for preparing the programme for celebration of important national days, making arrangements with regard to rallies and meetings and for doing welfare work amongst the civilian population, which included provision of economic and medical relief, etc.

### (6) *Housing and Transport Department:*

This department was responsible for providing housing accommodation for all the staff, and arranging temporary accommodation for delegates attending conferences, and guests arriving from outside. It was also responsible for the control and maintenance of cars and other vehicles, and

meeting the demands for transport by the departments concerned.

(7) *Women's Department:*

This department was responsible for the organization of the different lines of women's activities in the Movement, such as enlistment in the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, preparation of bandages, flags, holding of women's meetings, etc.

(8) *Supply Department:*

This was very important department and was organized to cater for the different kinds of supplies required by the Indian National Army which could not be provided for by the Japanese authorities, and for the members of the Azad Hind Dal, and the Indian Independence League. It also arranged for the purchase of cloth required for making uniforms. It established factories for preparing uniforms in Singapore, and boots in Bangkok. It arranged for the supply of mosquito-nets, water-bottles and haversacks. It also made arrangements for the purchase of articles of food, such as *dal* and maize from Siam and Indo-China, maize from Sumatra, etc. It also purchased medicines in large quantities in order to make a base supply depot for the Indian National Army, and also for the health units required for the liberated areas under the Provisional Government. It established supply depots on the route of march when the Army moved from Malaya to Burma. These depots were located in Kuala Lumpur, Hadjyai, Chumphon, Bangkok, and Rangoon. It appointed purchasing and distributing agents in different parts of Malaya, Siam, Burma, and Indo-China.

(9) *Recruitment Department:*

This department was responsible for the recruitment of volunteers for the Indian National Army, Azad Hind

Dal, and others training institutions. It opened many recruiting centres to cope with the very large number of volunteers who wanted to join the Azad Hind Fauj. Tens of thousands of people offered themselves. At times the rush was so great that it was difficult to deal with it.

(10) *Training Department:*

This department was responsible for the preparation of a programme of training of volunteers given in the different camps established for this purpose. The Indian Independence League established a large Volunteer Training Camp at Saleġtar, Singapore. In this Camp there was in the beginning difficulty about accommodation, as many of the barracks had become old. A large number of new barracks were constructed with suitable material collected from some of the old barracks, which were dismantled. The volunteers helped in the construction and repair of these barracks. In the Camp there were no separate kitchens for Hindus, Muslims, or Christians. They all partook of the food prepared in the same kitchen, sat together while taking food and lived together without distinction of caste or creed. The volunteers also grew a good portion of the vegetables required for themselves. They established kitchen gardens within the Camp for this purpose. For most of the volunteers this sort of life was new. They had long yearned for it and now had the opportunity to see and enjoy it. It was the fulfilment of their ambition, and they greatly liked it. They went through their training programme with zest and zeal and almost all completed their course within the fixed period. The training staff and the Camp Commandant were appointed by the 'G' Branch of the Supreme Headquarters of the Azad Hind Fauj. They carried out the physical training, military drill, musketry and all other requisities of military training required for a sepoy. But in respect of administration, supply of rations and general control, the Camp was under the Indian Inde-

pendence League. The programme of training was for six months. The volunteers had to undergo this intensive training fairly strenuously. In the beginning there was some dissatisfaction among some of the volunteers with the rigorous military training which was intensified by the difficulty over the language question, as the volunteers were mostly South Indians while the instructors and officers were almost entirely from North India. The volunteers could not understand Hindusthani, while the officers could not understand Tamil, Telegu or Malayalam. There were instances of serious misunderstandings, and even outbreaks which almost amounted to mutiny ; but they were quickly controlled and were completely eliminated, when the men were addressed in their own language by special officers of the Indian Independence League. Finally, Mr. Yellappa, the Chairman of the Indian Independence League, Singapore, was put in charge of the Camp and trouble arose no longer. The training proceeded smoothly and the volunteers gave a very good account of themselves both at the end of the training period as well as in the field of battle on the Indo-Burma frontier.

This department also supervised the training given in the different camps and institutions, such as those in the Azad Schools, which were meant solely for training instructors for giving training to volunteers amongst the civilian population. It also supervised part-time training of civilian people who were not enlisted as regular volunteers. It prepared the necessary manuals required for the purpose.

#### (11) *Intelligence Department:*

It was responsible for the collection, collation and reporting of all information gathered in connection with the activities of enemy agents, movements of Indians whose integrity was doubtful, investigation of complaints when necessary, general watch over the attitude of the members of the civilian population as well as the armed forces.



(12) *Reconstruction Department:*

In order to provide for re-construction of the liberated areas, a special department was organized and A. N. Sarkar, who was an experienced administrator in the Bengal Provincial Service, was put in charge as Secretary of the department. In order to provide for the Civil Administration of the areas immediately after taking over from the military authorities, suitable persons were selected and put through a training course. This included Administrators, Engineers, Doctors and Health Units, Technicians, Police, etc. It was, however, expected that the vast majority of the Indian civil officers would join us when we occupied a substantial portion of a province. These men needed for the civil side were organized into a semi-military organisation—"Azad Hind Dal".

(13) *Ceylon Department:*

A special department was opened up in the League which was to deal exclusively with all matters pertaining to the Ceylonese who were resident in S.-E. Asia. A band of young men were specially trained under the direction of Kotlawala Sahib, the Secretary in charge of this Dept. to do special work in Ceylon.

*League Badges:*

Each Territorial Committee of the Indian Independence League adopted for itself a badge for its executives. Some of the League branches had already adopted their own distinctive badges. These were to be worn on the right side of the chest just above the middle of the upper margin of the breast pocket. Beautiful designs were worked out. Some were very showy (Siam) and yet artistic, while others were simpler. Some were circular, some rectangular, while others were ornamental in design. The central object in each case was the National Tricolour flag in enamel. Above the flag was the name of the League and below it **EKTA, WISHWAS, BALIDAN**, all in enamel. A special

badge was evolved for the members of the Headquarters Staff of the Indian Independence League. It was comparatively small, neat, and beautiful. But it had the same elements in it, that is, the design of the Tricolour flag and the three words.

*Grades for League employees and their scales  
of pocket money :*

With the re-organisation of the League, all the members of the Headquarters were graded from "A" to "N" and their pocket money was fixed accordingly, the lowest being "A". The grades were so fixed that they more or less corresponded to the ranks of the I. N. A. The members were divided into two categories: (a) for local service in the station, (b) for general service—these members were liable to be sent wherever required. The scales of the 'local service' members were lower than those of volunteers for 'general service'. To carry this out it took some time and it was not complete till about the beginning of September. The secretary of a department received 250 dollars a month while an assistant secretary received 170 dollars per mensem. All members, when employed out of station, were entitled to free accommodation, food and clothing, according to a sanctioned scale. The scale of food was the same as the I.N.A. ration. When in a station they were not allowed free food. For clothing, each member received three suits of khaki, of which he had to pay for one only. Previously he had to pay half the cost of the three suits. When members were ordered to proceed to Burma or Siam, they received a full supply of kit—mosquito net, bed sheet, ankle-boots, socks, headgear, tennis shoes, water bottle, etc.

### **The Azad Hind Fauj**

On the 25th August, 1943, Netaji took over the Supreme Command of the Indian National Army which he re-named

the "Azad Hind Fauj", and issued the following Special Order of the Day :

"I welcome ! In the interests of the Indian Independence Movement and of the Azad Hind Fauj, I have taken over the direct command of our Army from this day.

"This is for me a matter of joy and pride because for an Indian there can be no greater honour than to be the Commander of India's Army of Liberation. But I am conscious of the magnitude of the task that I have undertaken and I am weighed down with a sense of responsibility. I pray that God may give me the strength to fulfil my duty to Indians under all circumstances, however difficult or trying they may be.

"I regard myself as the servant of 38 crores of my countrymen, who profess different religious faiths. I am determined to discharge my duties in such a manner that the interests of these 38 crores may be safe in my hands and every single Indian will have reason to put complete faith in me. It is only on the basis of undiluted nationalism and of perfect justice and impartiality that India's Army of Liberation can be built up.

"In the coming struggle for the emancipation of our Motherland, for the establishment of a Government of Free India based on the goodwill of 38 crores of Indians and for the creation of a permanent army which will guarantee Indian independence for all time, the Azad Hind Fauj has a vital rôle to play. To fulfil this rôle we must weld ourselves into an Army that will have only one will, namely, to do or die in the cause of India's freedom. When we stand, the Azad Hind Fauj has to be like a wall of granite; when we march, the Azad Hind Fauj has to be like a steam-roller.

"Our task is not an easy one ; the war will be long and hard, but I have complete faith in the justice and invincibility of our cause. 38 crores of human beings, who form about one-fifth of the human race, have a right to be free and they are now ready to pay the price for freedom.

There is consequently no power on earth that can deprive us of our birthright of liberty any longer.

“Comrades, officers and men! With your unstinted support and unflinching loyalty, the Azad Hind Fauj will become the instrument of India’s liberation. Ultimately victory will certainly be ours, I assure you. Our work has already begun. With the slogan ‘Onward to Delhi’ on our lips, let us continue to fight till our National Flag flies over the Viceroy’s House in New Delhi, and the Azad Hind Fauj holds its victory parade inside the ancient Red Fortress of the Indian metropolis.”

Netaji completely re-organized the Indian National Army. He abolished the Military Bureau, and appointed Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Genl.) J. K. Bhonsle as his Chief of Staff. He opened enlistment of the civilian population for recruitment to the Indian National Army, revised the scales of pocket allowances and increased the scale of rations for the troops. The total strength of the Army was increased to three active Divisions—each ten thousand strong, and 20,000 more volunteers were recruited and were put under training. On his arrival, enlistment of volunteers from among the prisoners of war and from the first I.N.A. increased greatly ; the number went up from 8,000 to 20,000. A still greater number of volunteers could have been obtained from the previous Army, but unfortunately during the interregnum the Japanese had removed large bodies of men to different parts of South-east Asia to help them in the war work, such as preparation of airfields and construction of roads, bridges and barracks. Netaji, after his arrival, had asked the Japanese to bring back as many Indians from the different areas as possible, but the Japanese pleaded shortage of ships for transporting them, and urged that active help in the war work, as mentioned above, was urgently needed. They said that the Indians by helping in this way were also really helping in the conjoint programme of war work. They also pressed their right to

employ the Indian prisoners of war in the different parts of South-east Asia who had not volunteered to join the Indian National Army.

#### I. ORGANISATION OF THE AZAD HIND FAUJ :

The Indian National Army was re-organized. It was re-named the Azad Hind Fauj. The Military Bureau was abolished ; so also the post of the Army Commander. On account of the complete re-organization, there was very great enthusiasm amongst the men. Volunteers at the time of enlistment in the Indian National Army took an oath to fight and to make the supreme sacrifice for the independence of India, and pledged their fidelity to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

I. SUPREME HEADQUARTERS: It consisted of the Supreme Commander, the Chief of Staff, and the Heads of Branches. It is shown in Chart No. IX. Netaji consulted someone about the necessity of his assuming a military rank because of his taking over of the Supreme Command of the Army. He was advised not to do so in the current circumstances. He did not assume any military rank. This was a very wise step. It made him all the more loved by the soldiers. As a real Supreme Commander of the Army he at once began to take an active interest in the details of all important matters. He himself dealt directly with some of the heads of the Branches such as 'G', 'Q', Military Secretary.

The following Branches were established :—

(i) 'G' Branch—It was put in charge of Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) Shah Nawaz Khan. This branch was responsible for planning, operation, training of troops, and intelligence work of the army.

(ii) 'A' Branch—It was put in charge of Lt.-Col. (now Col.) N. S. Bhagat. This branch was responsible for issuing necessary orders and general administration.

Different Branches, Formations, and Units, were established, and Commanding Officers appointed as mentioned below:

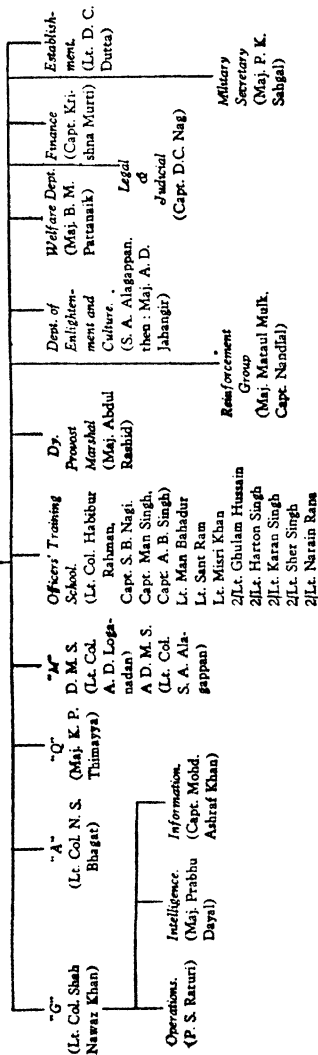
CHART IX

(Showing the reorganization of the Supreme Headquarters  
of the Azad Hind Fauj)

SUPREME COMMANDER  
(Neraji Subhas Chandra Bose)

A.D.C. (Capt. B. S. Rawat)      A.D.C. (Capt. Shamasur Singh)      A.D.C. (Capt. Kulbir Thapa)      A.D.C. (Capt. Rizwi) (Later)

Chief of Staff  
(Lt. Col. J. K. Bhondele)      D.P.M. (Maj. Abdul Rashid)



(iii) 'Q' Branch—Lt.-Col. (now Col.) K. P. Thini-mayya was appointed as the head of this Branch. This was responsible for the supply of accommodation, equipment, clothing, rations, transport, etc.

(iv) Medical Branch—Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) A. D. Loganadan was appointed Director of Medical Services. This was responsible for the maintenance of health, prevention and cure of disease. It was generally responsible for the mental and physical welfare of the troops.

(v) Dept. of Education and Culture—Lt.-Col. Jahangir was appointed Commandant. This was responsible for educational and propaganda campaigns amongst the troops. It continued to publish newspapers and propaganda bulletins as before.

Consultations were held with the Japanese military authorities with regard to the training that would be suitable for the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj in the rôle they would play in the coming campaign on the Indo-Burma frontier. It was mutually decided that in view of the smaller number of the troops as well as of their greater suitability, the Azad Hind Fauj would carry on guerilla warfare. This meant that they would have to largely depend upon their own initiative, but would keep contact with the Japanese units which might be operating in their neighbourhood. They had to be extremely mobile as they might have to carry out raids and operate behind the enemy lines even up a depth of fifty miles. For this reason they had to be lightly equipped and would have to live off the country in which they were operating. For this purpose they would have to establish close relationship with the people of the country. Even the medical branches for the treatment and evacuation of the sick were made to suit the guerilla warfare which the troops were going to adopt. With this object in view, all the training that was carried out and the equipment that was provided were meant for guerilla operations.

## II. FORMATION AND UNITS.

The Azad Hind Fauj consisted of the following formations and units :—

1. No. 1 Division. Commander : Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Genl.) M. Z. Kiani. It consisted of three Guerilla Regiments : (1) Gandhi Regiment ; Commander : Col. I. Kiani, (2) Azad Regiment ; Commander : Col. Gulzara Singh, (3) Nehru Regiment ; Commander : Col. (now Maj.-Genl.) Aziz Ahmed Khan.

The other groups, such as Hind Field Force, Bahadur Group, Intelligence Group, Reinforcement Group, were kept as they were, although a fair amount of re-shuffling was done. Changes were carried out from time to time as officers were transferred to other appointments either as a matter of policy or as occasion demanded, *e.g.*, Maj. Prabhu Dayal was transferred from the Intelligence Section of the 'G' branch to be Second in Command of the Azad Regiment ; transfer of Lt.-Col. Habibur Rahman as Dy. Chief of Staff to Burma and posting of Maj. Bishan Singh from the Nehru Regiment in his place ; transfer of Lt.-Col. A. D. Loganadan as Chief Commissioner of Shaheed and Swaraj Islands, of Lt.-Col. N. S. Bhagat as Commander of the 2nd Division of the Azad Hind Fauj, transfer of Maj. Mataul Mulk from Reinforcement Group as Commander, Volunteers' Training Camp, etc.

An Intelligence Group was commanded by Lt.-Col. (now Col.) S. N. Malik Sardar-e-jung. This Section was responsible for collection, collation and reporting of useful information relating to our own troops as well as those of the enemy. It was also responsible for organising units for intelligence work in the front line as well as behind the lines of the enemy.

### *Badges.*

(a) *Rank Badges* : Some of the former badges of rank were maintained, some discarded, and some altered. The



following badges were ultimately adopted for the Azad Hind Fauj :—

- Lance Naik— One small white cloth strip  $2'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$  worn horizontally over the outer side of the upper arm  $3''$  below the shoulder joint.
- Naik— Two small parallel white cloth strip  $2'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$  and  $\frac{1}{2}''$  apart, worn horizontally over the outer side of the upper arm  $3''$  below the shoulder joint.
- Havildar— Three small parallel white cloth strips  $2'' \times \frac{1}{2}''$  and  $\frac{1}{2}''$  apart from each other and worn horizontally over the outer side of the upper arm  $3''$  below the shoulder joint.
- Sub Officer— Blue edging all round the shoulder epaulette.
- Second Lieutenant— One bar of dark blue cloth of woven thread  $\frac{1}{4}''$  broad worn over the shoulder epaulette near the outer end. (With blue edgings all round the shoulder epaulette).
- Lieutenant— Two bars of dark blue cloth of woven thread  $\frac{1}{4}''$  broad worn over the shoulder epaulette near the outer end and  $\frac{1}{2}''$  apart. (With blue edgings all round the shoulder epaulette).
- Captain— Three bars of dark blue cloth of woven thread  $\frac{1}{4}''$  broad worn over the shoulder epaulette near the outer end and  $\frac{1}{2}''$  apart. (With blue edgings all round the shoulder epaulette).
- Major— One bar gold thread  $\frac{1}{4}''$  broad worn over the shoulder epaulette near the outer end. (A wheel with stokes of gold thread near the inner end of the shoulder epaulette).

Lieutenant-Colonel—Two bars gold thread  $\frac{1}{4}$ " broad worn over the shoulder epaulette near the outer end and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " apart. (A wheel with stokes of gold thread near the inner end of the shoulder epaulette).

Colonel—Three bars gold thread  $\frac{1}{4}$ " broad worn over the shoulder epaulette near the outer end and  $\frac{1}{2}$ " apart with red edgings all round the shoulder epaulette. (A wheel with stokes of gold thread near the inner end of the shoulder epaulette).

Major General—Two crossed swords of gold thread. With gold thread edgings all round the shoulder epaulette. (A wheel with stokes of gold thread near the inner end of the shoulder epaulette).

(b) *Party Badge* : A special badge was adopted for wearing by all members of the Azad Hind Fauj just above the inner corner of the right side upper pocket of the khaki bush coat or shirt. It consisted of a metal disc one inch in diameter on which the three colours of the National Tricolour flag were enamelled.

(c) *Headgear Badge* : The old headgear badge was changed as the central red circle reminded one of the Japanese Rising Sun. An outline of India with floral designs on both sides and on top with the letters I.N.A. just above the outline and the words ITTEFAQ, ETMAD, KURBANI, below the outline was cut out in metal by a die and was adopted as the badge for the headgear.

*Pocket Allowance* : On account of the increased cost of living, the scales of pocket money were increased from time to time.

### III. TRAINING.

Intensive training, both physical and spiritual, was started. Close attention was paid to the smallest unit in the army in minute detail.

(a) *Physical* : Physical training consisted of freehand physical exercises, different kinds of games, and long route marches.

(b) *Military* : Military drill which extended from the smallest squad-drill to divisional exercises. Troops were given musketry training and intensive bayonet practice. The Japanese Army had evolved a good type of bayonet practice. Wherever possible, this practice was incorporated in the training of the troops. Special emphasis was given to training in jungle warfare. Large bodies of troops were concentrated at fixed rendezvous and were deployed in the jungles. They attacked the enemy at given signals and re-formed after gaining their objective. Troops had intensive training in camouflage work and put up machinegun nests in suitably concealed places. The heavy guns of the A.F.V. Battalion carried out target practice near the seashore. In the early stages experienced instructors of the old Indian Army were employed but later, with the establishment of the Officers' Training School and the N.C.O.'s Training School, fresh men became available who gave a good account of their own training by instructing the new trainees thoroughly.

(c) *Spiritual* : Spiritual training was given in an intensive manner so that every officer and man could understand the significance of the Cause; of the Oath he had taken as a volunteer on his enlistment in the Indian National Army, and of the Pledge he had given to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. Lectures were given to the men from time to time for this purpose, and in order to raise their spirits suitable national dramas and playlets were performed before the troops.

(d) *Literacy campaign* : A literacy campaign was started in which Hindusthani was the language used, for

not only were a large number of the troops illiterate but there were now a large number of troops who came from South India and could not converse with the other troops with ease. Hindusthani was developed as the common language. It was Hindusthani of a simple type, devoid as far as possible of all high-flown Urdu or Hindi words. It was Hindusthani as spoken by the common on the street. To avoid all controversy, the Roman alphabet with suitable modification was used as the script. Thus the necessity of learning two scripts—Hindi and Urdu—were avoided, and it was easier and clearer writing. The two newspapers which were specially published for the troops, one the *English Voice of India*, and the other the Hindusthani *Awaz-i-Hind* in Roman characters, were printed in larger numbers. The men read the Hindusthani newspaper with very great interest.

(e) *Officers' Training School*: As the army was going to expand, the dearth of suitably trained officers was felt. It was therefore decided to establish at once an Officers' Training School in Neesoon. Lt.-Col. Habibur Rahman was appointed the first Officer Commanding of that School. Other suitably experienced officers were specially selected as instructors. Special emphasis was laid on proper spiritual training of the cadets. This was considered extremely imperative for they had to become the leaders of their troops, and unless they were imbued with the highest national spirit, they could not function properly. Subsequent events in the actual battlefield proved that this emphasis was a very prudent step. The officers graduating out of this Officers' Training School gave an excellent account of themselves when they led the troops on the different battlefields on the Indo-Burma frontier. As a matter of fact, it will not be an exaggeration to say that they actually excelled in numerous instances as many of the officers belonging to the original Indian Army. Cadets were selected from the existing army as well as from suitable civilians from whom applications were called for through

advertisement in the papers. The selection was made by a board of senior officers. The cadets finally selected underwent intensive training for six months. At the end of the training period, an examination was held, although day-to-day observation was kept on each cadet and his progress marked. The cadet who stood first in the examination at the end of the term was presented with a Sword of Honour. The passing-out parade of the cadets was well worth witnessing. It compared very favourably with that of any Regular Army.

(f) *Volunteer Training Camps*: For the expansion of the Azad Hind Fauj, fresh recruitment had to be made. In the beginning, enlistment was made from among the volunteers from the Indian Army—both from the former I.N.A. category as well as from the prisoners of war—but later on it was almost entirely from the civilian population. Army recruits were directly absorbed in the Azad Hind Fauj. For the training of the civilian volunteers, camps were established under the management of the Indian Independence League, and the principal Training Camps were at Saleetar (Singapore) and in Kuala Lumpur. Regular members of the Azad Hind Fauj were attached to these camps as Instructors, Company Commanders, and Camp Commanders. These Camps, for the purposes of administration and control, were under the Indian Independence League, but for the purposes of internal discipline, training, and technical advice, were under the 'G' Branch of the Supreme Headquarters of the Azad Hind Fauj. The latter appointed the training staff.

(g) *N.C.O.'s Training School*: The Azad School in Singapore, originally started for training Instructors for the training of the civilian population, was converted into training schools for N.C.O.'s. With the expansion of the Army it was found necessary to have a large number of N.C.O.'s and although many men of the Regular Army were promoted to the rank of N.C.O.'s when found suitable, still the demand for more and more N.C.O.'s was very great. It

was, therefore, decided to train suitable candidates for a definite fixed period and, if found suitable, pass them out as N.C.O.'s. This became particularly necessary when civilian volunteers were trained and enrolled in the Azad Hind Fauj, for these had no previous connection with the Army and had no military background or tradition. Nevertheless, the training imparted to them as volunteers, as well as the course for the N.C.O.'s, had an excellent effect on them and they picked up extremely well the science and art of fighting. There were drawbacks here and there, and in several instances the training could only be completed when the men were actually put on the battlefield. Of course, it goes without saying that, by and large, the actual battlefield is the final training-ground for all troops. This school was directly controlled by the 'G' Branch of the Supreme Headquarters of the Azad Hind Fauj.

Netaji as Supreme Commander of the Azad Hind Fauj took particular interest in the training of all his men. He himself frequently inspected the troops, saw them under training in the parade ground and accompanied them in manoeuvres and in the training for jungle warfare. He visited their barracks, saw conditions in which they were living and inspected for himself the cooking of their food which he himself tasted. These inspections were often made at very short notice so that he might be able to see the actual condition prevailing from day to day. It was his personal interest in the welfare of the troops that greatly attracted them to him and they felt that they had a Commander who was deeply interested in every walk of their life. It was thus that love and respect for Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, Supreme Commander of the Azad Hind Fauj, was enshrined in the heart of every member of the Fauj.

(h) *Special Service Training Centres*: The Japanese had established camps in Penang for the training of Indians in infiltration and intelligence work in India. These were named Swaraj Youngmen's Training Centres. They

were opened in Rangoon and Penang. The one in Rangoon was first run in conjunction with Baba Osman's party and later on was under the direction of Karim Gani Chairman of the Indian Independence League, until it was completely taken over by the officers of the Azad Hind Fauj early in 1944. The one in Penang was taken over by N. Raghaban, but continued to receive help from the Japanese for some time until it was also taken over by the officers of the Azad Hind Fauj and put under the command of Maj. Swami. There was another one opened in Kuala Lumpur which was abolished later and converted into a volunteers' training camp.

(i) *Enlistment of recruits and establishment of Training Centres in East Asia:* As there were demands from different parts of East Asia for enlistment in the Azad Hind Fauj and as there were difficulties in immediately arranging transport for them, it was decided to send Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Genl.) A. D. Loganadan to go into these territories to arrange for the medical examination of the volunteers in order to ascertain their physical fitness, arrange for their enlistment and training at the localities in which he was authorised to establish training camps, and ask for the necessary training staff from Malaya after he had completed his investigation. In accordance with this decision of Netaji, he visited Bangkok, Hongkong, and Shanghai. In Hongkong there were a large number of prisoners of war, but there were also quite a number of civilians who were eager to join the Movement either in the Azad Hind Fauj or the League. In Shanghai there was a large number of Indian policemen, almost all Sikhs with excellent physique. There were 800 of them who wanted to be enlisted. The wives and daughters of these policemen also wanted to join the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. Lt.-Col. Loganadan inspected all these places and made suitable arrangements for the training of the volunteers. The training staff was sent later on from Singapore. The local people at every place co-operated thoroughly. There was great difficulty in Shanghai over the

establishment of a suitable camp due to lack of proper accommodation and site, but the Sikh Gurdwara authorities offered the Gurdwara and its adjoining grounds for the establishment of the training camp. This patriotic offer was very highly appreciated by Netaji.

On learning about the terrible famine conditions in Bengal, Netaji broadcast from Singapore in August, 1943 offering one hundred thousand tons of rice as a free gift for the people of Bengal. But the British Government of India did not agree to accept the offer, although millions died of starvation. He could have sent more if the offer were accepted.

## INDIAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT IN EUROPE

While in Germany Netaji as a true soldier kept himself physically fit by taking physical training regularly. He went on long route marches with the full equipment of an officer. He acquainted himself with military matters as much as he could. He learnt the German language and studied books on military affairs. He had the opportunity to visit the different fronts in Europe where the German Army was operating. He also saw the industrial organisation which was helping the war effort. Thus he had a good knowledge of the German military machine, and was greatly impressed by its thoroughness. His close study, however, of the German political machinery did not satisfy him. He felt that the way the Germans were dealing with some of the occupied countries was not conducive to the growth and development of that fellow-feeling and joint war effort without which success in war was extremely doubtful.

In Germany he came to know Colonel Yamamoto, the Military Attache to the Japanese Embassy in Berlin. They became very friendly and when Netaji arrived in South-east Asia, it was seen that Col. Yamamoto was greatly attached to him. But towards the later stages of the war in South-east Asia this friendship was greatly strained.



It was in Germany that the greeting *Jai Hind* was introduced by Netaji and used by the Indians for greeting one another. Many civilian Indians like Messrs. Arial Nambiar, Promode Ranjan Sen, Swamy, Abid Hassan, Abdur Rahman, Lal and others joined the Independence Movement. A. C. Nambiar was of very great help to Netaji. He was appointed a Minister of State in Germany when the Provisional Government of Free India was formed on 1st October, 1943 in Singapore, and he carried on the work of the Provisional Government in Germany. Swamy and Abid Hassan received military training in Germany and accompanied Netaji when he came to South-east Asia. There they joined the Azad Hind Fauj. Swamy was a qualified electrical engineer and was put in charge of the training camp of the Special Service men in Penang, while Abid Hassan first acted as Netaji's Private Secretary and then was appointed a Staff Officer of the 1st Division. Sharma and Lal greatly helped the Movement by their forceful and well-reasoned systematic radio broadcasts. So did Malik from the Berlin Radio Station in his incomparable Hindusthani.

*Formation of the Indian National Army* :—After the fall of Tobruk on the northern coast of Africa, large numbers of Indian prisoners of war fell into the hands of the Italians and Germans. They were taken over to Italy first. The Italians tried there to form a group of Indian soldiers to fight side by side with the Italians, particularly for the liberation of India which the Italians considered possible at a later date. Baba Ajit Singh of *Kamagata Maru* fame was also there. He tried to help in its formation but it fell through.

Volunteers were called from amongst the Indian prisoners of war for the formation of an I.N.A. in Germany. About 3,500 men volunteered to do so. As there were no suitable officers in the beginning, the army was trained by German officers and N.C.O's and received a thorough training which was carried out largely in Karlsbruck near

Dresden. While under training, which was on the same strenuous lines as those of the German army proper, the activities of the I.N.A., formed in Germany, were filmed. It is reported that these films are in the hands of the Americans and were actually shown to the public in Karlsruhe.

Then from amongst the men who had volunteered and had received appropriate training, 12 officers were gazetted in the Corps. Of these, 10 commanded units of the Army, each independently, while 2 other officers were not attached to the Army, one of them being a medical officer. As the Indian National Army was small, the units were attached to the German Army and fought on the sea-coast of South-west France, Belfort and Northern Italy. Those who fought in Belfort won recognition from the German Army for their valour. After the defeat of the German Army in France and Italy, many contingents of the Indian National Army retreated through Tyrol and Austria and tried to make for Russia in small groups, but almost all of them were unsuccessful in doing so. They fell into hands of the Americans and the British and were captured.

### INDIAN INDEPENDENCE LEAGUE IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

After the arrival of Netaji, closer contact was established with the Indian Independence League all over East and South-east Asia. He prepared a re-organization scheme for the Indian Independence League which was sent out to all the branches in those places. In accordance with his scheme new departments were established, greater emphasis being given to (a) the Finance Department for the collection of funds, (b) the Publicity and Propaganda Department for rousing the spirit of the people and giving them necessary information and directions regarding the Movement, holding of public meetings, celebration of National Days etc., and for asking the Indians to compose the differences and unite with each other so that the Independence

Movement could be intensified and spread amongst all Indians even to the remotest corner, (c) the Supply Department for the maximum collection of material required by the Indian National Army, not only from Malaya, but from Siam, Sumatra, Indo-China, Phillipines etc., (d) the Recruiting and Training Department for voluntary part-time training of the Indians and for the enlistment of volunteers for the Indian National Army from the civilian population. Accordingly the Indian Independence Leagues were re-organized and the following new Chairmen were appointed for the territories concerned :—

Malaya—Dr. Lakshumayya; Burma—Karim Gani; Siam—Sardar Iswar Singh; Java—Asu Mal; Sumatra—Methani; Saigon—Sheikh Mohammed Sahib; Hongkong—Dr. Naidu; Shanghai—Nanak Chand; Japan—Ramamurti.

*Malaya-Singapore* : With the re-organization of the League, Yelappa became its Chairman. He vigorously pushed on with the collection of funds and the recruitment of volunteers. Large sums of money ranging from a few cents to lakhs of dollars were collected. At public gatherings the garlands which were given to Netaji were sold by auction and fetched large sums of money which varied from a few thousands to a few lakhs of dollars. The enthusiasm and the spirit of patriotism evinced by the Indian community as a whole was marvellous. The whole atmosphere had changed and had become electrified since Netaji's arrival. The sacrifice, shown particularly by the poorer people, was unique. Several families gave up all they possessed and, in addition, enlisted themselves—father, mother, sons and daughters—for work in connection with the Indian Independence Movement. I would like specially to mention the gift of the *goalas* (milkmen) belonging to U.P. and Bihar, who donated all their cattle which sometimes fetched several thousand dollars per head, and then enlisted themselves as volunteers in the I.N.A. In one of the meetings held in Jalanbazar Stadium, one of Netaji's garlands was sold for five lakhs of dollars. Netaji was

presented with a silver *charkha*, and several other kinds of presents, most of which were re-sold for large sums of money.

An incident worth mentioning concerns a *goala*. He stood in the long queue of persons who wanted to give their all personally to Netaji. He said he possessed altogether two hundred dollars of which he had already given one hundred dollars in a previous meeting, and that he was going to pay the balance that afternoon. He happened to mention this to me. I advised him to keep at least twenty dollars with him and pay the rest so that he could meet his immediate expenses. He agreed and paid eighty dollars to Netaji and came away. After a while I noticed that he was standing again at the end of the queue. I asked him casually why he wanted again to go to Netaji. He said: "I have made up my mind to give my all, and as long as I possess twenty dollars, it will be a heavy burden on my mind. I want to feel happy and free of any care and therefore I want to get rid of these twenty dollars and pay Netaji everything that I have". I could not dissuade him from doing so. He went and paid his last dollar. When he came away from the platform after paying Netaji, he was happy as a sand-boy. This is only one illustration of the enthusiasm and patriotism which the Indian people in South-east Asia evinced in the campaign for the freedom of their country. There were innumerable such instances in different parts of the region. The enthusiasm and the spirit of competition in giving all they had was something which one had never seen before.

Women volunteered in large numbers to join the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. In due course they were sent down to Singapore for enlistment and training.

As soon as recruitment for training for enlistment into the Azad Hind Fauj was thrown open to the civilians there was a tremendous rush at the recruiting stations. The enthusiasm was unbounded and the eagerness irrepressible. Yet there were hundreds who had never been to India:

they were born in Malaya. In Singapore at one time the rush was so great that actual scuffles took place among the intending recruits for precedence in getting enlisted. Recruitment went on all over Malaya at the recruiting stations in all important towns. They poured into the Volunteers' Training Camps in Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Netaji had called for three hundred thousand men. But the Japanese could only provide arms to thirty thousand and rations for fifty thousand men. So only twenty thousand were recruited from the ex-Indian Army men and thirty thousand from the civilians who largely belonged to South India; only a few hundreds belonged to United Provinces and Bihar.

The League took a great interest in the education of the children on national lines. With the help of the Headquarters of the Indian Independence League it was able to establish at least three National Schools for children as well as for adults. The special feature of the curriculum of these schools was the teaching of Hindusthani, Indian National History and Physical Training. The schools were well attended and were a great success. The entire credit for the organization and smooth running of these schools is due to Brahmachari Kailasan whose very genial, simple, unassuming and sympathetic character overcame all the difficulties that had to be faced. His whole being existed for service to all who needed help. It is no exaggeration to say that such a worker for social welfare is rarely to be found.

*Mainland of Malaya:* Netaji made a tour of the mainland and visited several places. He was enthusiastically received all over the peninsula. He received contributions both in coin and kind. Women vied with each other in giving him their rings, bangles, brooches, watches and other ornaments. He visited several places, some of the important ones being Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Ipoh etc. After the arrival of Netaji the number of branches and sub-branches of the Indian Independence League increased very greatly.

There were 70 branches and sub-branches in Malaya, with nearly two hundred thousand membership. There were about 100 branches and sub-branches in Burma and 24 in Siam. Apart from this, there were branches in Java, Sumatra, Indo-China, Borneo, Philipines, Hongkong, Shanghai and Japan.

*Kuala Lumpur*: Under the able guidance of its Chairman Ram Chandra Naidu, the Independence Movement spread rapidly. They had opened a relief centre in which hundreds of people were being constantly given relief. The vast majority of these were labourers who had been thrown out of employment because of the closing or partial working of the rubber estates. Thousands were given relief and at one time there were several hundreds within the camp, old men, women, children and men. Most of them were famished due to starvation and a large number of them had been suffering from diseases like malaria, dysentery, etc. The centre worked magnificently. In the beginning volunteers helped to organise and administer the relief centre, but as the inmates became fit, either employment was secured for them or jobs were given to them in the internal administration of the camp itself.

After the re-organisation of the Indian Independence League its activities extended as regards recruitment and training as well as relief for the destitute and the poor. The relief work became so efficient that they could raise sufficient contributions locally in order to meet the expenses relating to the relief camp. From the people in the camp they organized a dramatic party which toured some of the important places in Malaya and collected over 40,000 dollars in a short time. For the efficient management of this relief work much credit was due to the chairman, Ram Chandra Naidu.

The Swaraj Institution was converted into a volunteers' training camp. In the beginning, due to various difficulties, it could not make much progress, but on the arrival of Maj. Soma Sundaram, whom Netaji detailed to take com-

mand of the camp, the centre greatly increased in efficiency. The local Japanese Liaison Officer Lt. Nui was of immense help, and gave every assistance to this camp and the Indian Independence League in all its activities. At first the League provided all expenses and material required for the volunteers' training camp. Later the Supreme Command of the Indian National Army assumed responsibility for the payment of the whole pocket allowances etc. Whenever the troops passed through Kuala Lumpur the League supplied the troops in transit with food and water.

*Penang* : After Netaji's arrival the command of the Youngmen's Swaraj Institute was taken over by Maj. Swami and thereafter the Japanese had very little to do with regard to training. .

*Burma* : Here also a Youngmen's Swaraj Institute had been established where a number of men were admitted and given training similar to those in Penang. A number of branches of the Indian Independence League were established in the districts.

*Siam* : Towards the end of September, Netaji paid an unofficial visit to Bangkok and stayed there in Ratnakosi Hotel. He was given a great ovation by the Indian people. He paid courtesy calls on the Regent and the Prime Minister Field-marshal Pibul Songgram. He wanted to establish personal contact with authorities of Siam which occupied a strategic position in the war economy of South-east Asia. As it happened, he was still in Bangkok on the 75th birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, 2nd October, 1943. It was befittingly celebrated. Netaji addressed his countrymen and paid tribute to Mahatma Gandhi in a broadcast from the Bangkok radio station, which shows that inspite of his differences with Mahatmaji on political matters, he had very deep regard and love for Mahatmaji. Netaji said :

"The people of India are so familiar with the life and work of Mahatma Gandhi that it would be insulting to their experience if I narrate again the events of his life. Instead of that I shall devote myself to an estimation of the position







Netaji's First Arrival in Bangkok.

In the foreground—Mr. Matani with garlands. Others :—Pəndit Raghunath Sharma, A. M. Sahay, Sri Debnath Das and Abid Hassan. July, '43.



Col. Lakshmi Swaminathan.

of Mahatmaji in the history of India's struggle for independence. The service which Mahatma Gandhi has rendered to India and to the cause of India's freedom is so unique and unparalleled that his name will be written in letters of gold in our national history for all time to come.

"In order to understand correctly the position of Mahatma Gandhi in the history of India, it is necessary to narrate briefly the conquest of India by the British. You all know that when the British set their foot on the soil of India, she was overflowing with milk and rice. It was India's wealth which tempted the poor British from beyond the seas. We see today that as a result of political slavery and economic exploitation the people of India are dying of hunger and starvation. And the British nation, which was once poor and in want, has become today well-nourished and luxurious with the wealth of India. The masses of India, through sorrow and suffering, through poverty and oppression, have at last learnt this lesson that the regaining of their lost independence is the only solution of their various problems.

"If we take into consideration the ways and means of the British conquest of India, we find that the British never tried to fight against all the people in any part of India, nor did they even try to conquer and annex the whole of India. They always tried to get in their clutches a set of people by means of bribery and dishonesty before they made any military preparations. This thing happened in Bengal itself. Here the Commander-in-Chief Mir Jafar was won over by promising him the throne of Bengal. At that time no one knew about religious or communal problems. Sirajuddaulah, the last independent king of Bengal, was a Muslim. His Commander-in-Chief, although a Muslim himself, betrayed him, and his commander Mohan Lal, although a Hindu, fought along with him till the last. From this incident in the history of India we learn this lesson that no nation can ensure its freedom unless measures are taken in time to guard against betrayal and for its punishment. Unfortu-

nately this incident in Bengal did not open in time the eyes of the people of India. If the people of India had united against the British even after the fall of Sirajuddaulah, then they could have been able to drive away the foreigners from India.

"No one can say that the people of India have not fought for their freedom. But they did not unite together and fight the battle. When the British attacked India, no one attacked them from the rear. Later, when the British were engaged in fighting Tipoo Sultan in Southern India, neither the Mahrattas in Central India nor the Sikhs in the Punjab went forward to the rescue of Tipoo Sultan. Even after the fall of Bengal, if Tipoo Sultan of Southern India, the Mahrattas of Central India and the Sikhs of Northern India could unite, it would have been possible to drive out the British. It is a misfortune that this was not done. Therefore, it was possible to attack India piecemeal and to spread gradually British rule over the whole country. From this painful chapter of the history of India we have learnt this lesson that if the people of India do not stand united against the enemy they can never win freedom, and even if they win freedom, they will not be able to maintain it."

"When the last World War was over and Indian leaders began to demand the liberty that had been promised to them, they discovered for the first time that they had been betrayed by perfidious Albion. The reply to their demand came in the form of the Rowlatt Act of 1919 which deprived them of what little liberty they still possessed. And when they protested against that Black Act, the Jallinwala Bagh massacre followed. For all the sacrifices made by the Indian people during the last World War, the two rewards were the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwalla Bagh massacre.

"After the tragic events of 1919 Indians were stunned and paralysed for the time being. All the attempts for achieving liberty had been ruthlessly crushed by the British and their armed forces. Constitutional agitation, boycott of British goods, armed revolution, all alike had failed to

bring freedom. There was not a ray of hope left, and the Indian people were groping in the dark for a new method and a new weapon of struggle. Just at this psychological moment, Gandhiji appeared on the scene with his novel method of Non-co-operation or Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience. It appeared as if he had been sent by Providence to show the path to liberty. Immediately and spontaneously the whole nation rallied round his banner. India was saved. Every Indian's face was now lit up with hope and confidence. Ultimate victory was once again assured.

"For twenty years and more Mahatma Gandhi has worked for India's salvation, and with him the Indian people have worked. It is no exaggeration to say that if in 1920 he had not come forward with his new weapon of struggle, India today would perhaps have still been prostrate. His services to the cause of India's freedom are unique and unparalleled. No single man could have achieved more in a single lifetime under similar circumstances. The nearest historical parallel to Mahatma Gandhi is perhaps Mustapha Kemal who saved Turkey after her defeat in the last World War, and who was then acclaimed by the Turks as the Gazi. Since 1920 the Indian people have learnt two things from Mahatma Gandhi which are the indispensable preconditions for the attainment of independence. They have, first of all, learnt national self-respect and self-confidence as a result of which revolutionary fervour is now blazing in their hearts. Secondly, they have now got a country-wide organisation which reaches the remotest village of India.

"Mahatma Gandhi has firmly planted our feet on the straight road to liberty. He and other leaders are now rotting behind prison bars. The task that Mahatma Gandhi began has, therefore, to be accomplished by his countrymen at home and abroad. I would like to remind you that when Mahatma Gandhi commended his Non-cooperation programme to the Indian nation at the annual session of the Congress at Nagpur in December, 1920 he said, 'If India had the sword today, she would have drawn the sword.' And

proceeding further, Mahatmaji said that since armed revolution was out of the question, the only other alternative before the country was that of Non-co-operation or Satyagraha. Since then times have changed and it is now possible for the Indian people to draw the sword. We are happy and proud that India's Army of Liberation has already come into existence, and is steadily increasing in number."

In Bangkok, too, the greatest enthusiasm and patriotism shown was by the *goalas* and other people coming from Bihar and United Provinces. They gave all they had and enlisted as volunteers of the I.N.A. in large numbers. As they could not be taken to Malaya, and on account of various other reasons, it was decided to open a training camp near Bangkok. Accordingly a site was selected in Conburi which was the gift of one of the local Indian inhabitants. Officers for the training of the volunteers were sent by the Supreme Command of the I.N.A. in Singapore, huts were erected and a regular camp was established which worked under the supervision of the local League who undertook to meet all the expenses excepting the pay of the training staff which was directly paid by the Supreme Headquarters of the I.N.A. A number of women volunteered to join the Rani of Jhansi Regiment and were therefore sent down to Singapore for training. Siam was a great potential supply centre and, therefore, a representative of the Supply Department from the Headquarters of the Indian Independence League in Singapore was sent to remain in Bangkok to obtain the necessary supplies (a) for stocking them in that place, (b) for sending them to Singapore and the mainland of Malaya, (c) for despatching them to meet the requirements of the army in Burma.

After the arrival of Netaji in South-east Asia and with the reorganization of the Indian Independence League all the differences in the local League were composed and a proper Territorial Committee of the Indian Independence League for Siam was established with its headquarters in Bangkok.

The Indo-Thai Cultural Lodge was a very useful institution in Bangkok. Its members were both Indians as well as Siamese. They helped the Indian Independence Movement. Its Founder-President was late Swami Satyananda Puri, who died in the plane crash in Japan on his way to Tokyo, as already mentioned. This Lodge was doing very good work in spreading ideas about Indian culture, religion and philosophy, and in cultivating and improving Indo-Siamese relations. Swami Satyananda Puri was greatly loved and revered by the Siamese people and particularly by those among them who were Oriental scholars; many of them belonged to the Royal family, such as H.R.H. Prince Van Watha Karan.

*Hongkong* : It was an important manufacturing centre and articles like electric torches, bulbs and matches could be obtained in large quantities. Nearly three hundred recruits joined the Azad Hind Fauj and the Movement.

*Philippines* : The League in the Philippines obtained large supplies of various kinds of material, but unfortunately a big consignment sank in the sea when the boat carrying the supplies was torpedoed by an enemy submarine. But they again sent supplies. Mosquito nets made of fibre (sisal) were very welcome.

*Shanghai* : When Netaji visited Shanghai on his return from Japan, remarkable enthusiasm was shown. Not only did men enlist as volunteers, but nearly 150 women volunteered for the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. There was quite a sizeable Indian colony here, of whom nearly 800 had volunteered for the Azad Hind Fauj; of these the vast majority belonged to the Shanghai Police; they were hefty men hailing from the Punjab—Sikhs. Shanghai was also an important supply centre, but the transport question became more and more difficult as time went on and, therefore, much advantage could not be taken of the supplies available there except those meant for local consumption.

*Sumatra*: It was found that on account of lack of suitable communications it was difficult to administer the League's work all over the island from its headquarters at Medan. Therefore, Sumatra was divided into two regions, North and South. Another headquarters was established at Palembang for the Southern region. Sumatra was third in point of population of Indians in East Asia. There were possibilities of obtaining a certain amount of supplies, particularly foodgrains, from this area; it supplied maize in abundance.

*Java*: The number of Indians in this territory was comparatively small, but they were intensely patriotic and contributed quite a large sum of money. It was also a very important centre in respect of supplies. Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) Alagappan, when he later became the Minister of Supplies, visited the island. He secured a fair quantity of supplies from there. Much more could have been secured earlier when arrangement for transport was less difficult but the local Japanese authorities put many obstructions to the despatch of the supplies. Later on, when they relented the transport problem had become very difficult and so the total quantity that could be transported was much less.

*Japan*: A number of Indian Associations were established in different places like Yokohama, Tokyo, Kobe etc. These were all merged in the Indian Independence League whose Headquarters was established at Tokyo. A certain period was allocated to the League for broadcasting from the Tokyo Radio Station.

*Indo-China*: As disputes had arisen among the workers of the Movement in Indo-China, Netaji sent D. M. Khan to compose the differences and put the Association on a proper and sound footing. D.M. Khan, accompanied by Chidambaram Chettiar and Maulana Abdul Aziz, went to Saigon and tried to establish more harmonious relations among the workers. Nuruddin retired from the Chairmanship and Sheikh Mohamed was elected

Chairman of the Territorial Branch of Indo-China. Indo-China was also a great potential supply centre and later on, when the different departments had been properly organized, quite a fair quantity of different kinds of material, including articles of food, was sent from here to Bangkok *en route* to Burma as well as Malaya and Singapore. When Netaji visited Saigon for the first time in November, 1943 he was enthusiastically received by the Indians, but as the French did not like his presence there, the Japanese military authorities had to take special precautions. He appealed to the Indians for Unity, Faith, and Sacrifice in the cause of their Motherland. A very remarkable incident occurred one evening when a young Sindhi merchant, barely 22 years old, came to see him. On enquiry as to what he wanted, he said that he wanted to have a *darshan* of Netaji and wanted to offer his humble mite. He saw Netaji for a few minutes and gave him a cheque for 500,000 piastres and requested that this be considered an anonymous donation as he wanted to remain unknown. Later on, however, although it was not mentioned on official records, this became known by any by to the public. This being the first contribution of over one hundred thousand dollars in East Asia, it was greatly appreciated. He also offered his services for work in the Indian Independence Movement whenever required. This was Khiamal of Messrs. Lal Chand & Sons of Saigon.



## CHAPTER VIII

### RANI OF JHANSI REGIMENT

India's women have always played a very important part in moulding the destinies of their children. They do not boast of their influence, but it is there and is strong. Whenever they have been neglected, India has suffered. Throughout the history of India at different stages women have shown their capacities in the different arts and in different spheres of life. Whether in the art of home-making as a mother or as a wife, or in matters of religion, culture, devotion and courage, or in the study of literature, philosophy, mathematics, or in the art of administration or even in the art of fighting, she has left such glorious and indelible marks on Indian civilisation that as long as Indians are a living nation they shall offer their homage to and cherish them. As a mother, it was Jashoda who was responsible for the upbringing of Sri Krishna. As a mother, it was Kunti who was responsible for the upbringing of Yudhisthira, Bhima and Arjuna. As a mother, it was Jijabai who was responsible for the upbringing of Shivaji. All great men of India have been profoundly influenced by their mothers whom they have loved and respected. Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Sir Goorodas Bannerji, Sir Protul Chandra Chatterji, owed it to their mothers for the formation of their character which was the foundation of their achievement in life. Ancient Indian civilisation teaches that the mother and the Motherland are more glorious than heaven. As a wife Sita and Savitri stand unparalleled. They inspire the greatest respect and admiration in the hearts of all people for the spirit of sacrifice and love which they bore for their husbands, and for the ideal of womanly chastity.

It is the women of India who have handed down from generation to generation the religion of the forefathers

of their children. They are fundamentally religious of mind and are devout worshippers of God. It is the women of India who have passed the torch of civilisation and traditions from generation to generation. The religious devotion of Mirabai and of Jehanara are well known. The patriotic devotion of Panna, the foster-mother of Udai Singh who later became the Rana of Mewar, is unique in the history of the world. She willingly sacrificed the life of her own child so that the life of the future Rana of Mewar might be saved. As the executioner came into the palace to kill the infant Udai Singh, the future Rana of Mewar, she substituted her own child in his place and pointed it out to the executioner when he demanded Udai Singh to be delivered to him. In the struggle for freedom during recent times thousands of daughters of India have suffered imprisonment and lathi charges of the British Indian police. They have gladly joined the revolutionary groups who are trying for the liberation of India and have faced death bravely.

It was Lilawati, a daughter of India, who evolved the decimal system and the roots of algebra now spread all over the world. The standard of excellence of the philosophical works of Maitreyi and Gargi are as high as any others in the world. The daughters of India have shown a great capacity for administration. Maharani Ahalya Bai of Indore ruled over her large domain with sagacity, firmness and benevolence. Empress Rezia ruled over the throne of Delhi with justice and kindness. Maharani Swarnamayi of Cossimbazar and Rani Rashmani of Janbazar (Calcutta) administered their vast zemindaries with great care and intelligence; their charities are famous in Bengal. Rani Bhawani of Natore was also a great administratrix. If the advice she had given had been accepted by the conspirators who brought in the British in Bengal, the history of India would have been different. She was the only person who advised against bringing in the British. She said that even if Nawab Sirajuddaula had made mistakes, he could put

them right some day. He belonged to our soil; but the British did not. He could not take things away from the country, but the British would. She strongly advised against betraying him, but she was not listened to.

In recent years, the women of India have been making marked progress. It was a daughter of India, Vijayalakshmi Pandit, who became the first woman Minister in the world. It was a daughter of India, Radhabai Subbarao, who became the first Deputy Speaker of a Legislative Assembly. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu is well known the world over both as a poetess as well as a political leader. Rajkumari Amrit Kaur, Mrs. Tyabji, Mrs. Shah Nawaz, Rani Rajwade and a host of other Indian women leaders have created a landmark in the history of the political and social development of India. They could have made far greater progress had the country not been enslaved. It is a fact that in extending the franchise to the women it is the British rulers of India who have been least helpful. It is a fact that when the question of granting the vote to the women came before the Bengal Legislative Assembly for the first time, it was the European legislators who opposed and defeated the proposal. But when throughout the rest of India the question of granting the vote to the women was put before the legislatures, it was promptly passed. There was no question of women struggling for it. They got it the moment they asked for it. That shows what influence they wield. There was no question of tying oneself up in chains before the Houses of Parliament or of a woman whipping a British Minister, as had happened in England. Women in India have always exerted and still do exert a tremendous influence over the people of the country. Yet they have been and still are principally home-makers. Sarojini Naidu, Vijayalakshmi Pandit and Radhabai Subbarao have successfully brought up their children. But in a free India, Indian women will get a far better opportunity to develop their individualities and to contribute to the progress of their Motherland.

Daughters of India throughout history have given ample proof that they can fight shoulder to shoulder with their husbands and brothers in the field of battle when necessity arises. They can undergo hardships and sacrifices in the same way as men. They have shown extraordinary tactical intelligence and bravery like their men. In the *Ramayana*, the eagerness of Promila, wife of Meghnad, to fight Ram Chandra is well known. The marvellous intelligence and bravery shown by Padmini in the rescue of her husband Maharana Bhim Singh from the clutches of Alauddin Khilji, when she deliberately entered the latter's camp and safely brought away her husband, is still a matter of pride for every Rajput. The defence of the fort of Ahmednagar by Chand Bibi against the large invading horde of Mughals is almost an epic in Indian history. As long as she was alive, the fort could not be conquered in spite of several assaults. The strategy employed by Empress Nurjehan in rescuing Emperor Jehangir from the grip of his rebellious son Shah Jehan while the former crossed the river bridge, is well known. The history of Rani Durgabati of Garhmandal in the defence of her realm against overwhelming odds is almost an epic. Although it was unsuccessful, still the bravery and valour she showed was superb, and when she saw that everything was lost, she destroyed herself rather than surrender to the enemy. The valour shown by Shona in defending the fortress of Hussain Shah in Bengal is of a kind which people of any nation might be proud of. The organising capacity, bravery and valour shown by Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi in not only defending her own domain, but also in successfully reducing the almost impregnable fortress of Gwalior, form a glorious chapter in the history of India. She, a widow not yet quite beyond her teens, died sword in hand in the field of battle. No Indian who has studied the history of this country can ever forget these remarkable episodes.

Naturally Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose always had in his mind the great part played by women in the history

of India. Particularly he had noticed that in recent times the rising generation of Indian women was taking a more and more active part in the political struggle of their Motherland. Thousands of them had faced lathi charges and firing by the police to suppress them. Thousands of them had deliberately undergone imprisonment and thousands of them had received injuries. They had freely joined the revolutionary movement, and it is a matter of tremendous credit to them that none of them excepting one could be apprehended alive, although hard pressed at times and when men were being caught so. Netaji cherished a profound respect and love for the womanhood of his Motherland. He believed that once the women were induced to participate in any struggle, that struggle could not possibly die out easily for they held the key position in society. From the biological point of view, too, it is true that if they could be induced to take up something in the interest of the nation, they would do it thoroughly and tenaciously as long as it was within their capacity. The mother's influence on the formation of her child's physique is almost as profound as that of the father. From the viewpoint of Sociology, it is also true that it is the woman who transmits the manners, customs and traditions of a nation from generation to generation. The mother's influence in the formation of the character of her child is far more profound than that of the father.

Bearing in mind all the factors mentioned above, it was but natural for Netaji to consider the establishment of a Women's Organization part of which would be a combatant unit in India's Independence Movement in South-east Asia. He accordingly conceived the idea of establishing a Women's Regiment and named it after the illustrious Rani of Jhansi who had laid down her life in the first Indian Revolution against British Imperialism in 1857. He also decided that a section of this Regiment would have training in nursing. He, therefore, during his tours in Malaya, Siam and Burma referred to the establish-





Rani of Jhansi Regt. practising Bayonet-fighting

Rangoon, Feb., '44.



Netaji inspecting Rani of Jhansi Regt. Accompanied by  
Capt. Mrs. Thevers and Lt. Col. Kiani.

ment of this women's organization. The start was made in Singapore. Although a great deal of enthusiasm was shown, naturally women who had never come out of their homes and never even seen a rifle were at first rather hesitant. But a few stalwarts braved taking a forward step, and in this Dr. (now Lt.-Col.) Laxmi Swaminathan took the initiative. When a few of them, though wearing *saries*, supplied for Netaji his Guard of Honour holding rifles in their hands, in the grounds of the Indian Independence League, Singapore, in the month of September, 1943, the eyes of the whole of the Indian community were agog. The news of women presenting arms—rifles with fixed bayonets—spread like wild fire all over the place. A steady stream of women volunteers began to pour in, and soon the hundred mark was reached. It became necessary to establish a proper camp for them, which was established in the barracks opposite the offices of the local Indian Independence League in Singapore. Finally, the camp was officially opened by Netaji himself on the 22nd October, 1943. The barracks were completely renovated and some new ones were erected. New lavatory and bathing arrangements were made. The ground was cleared and completely fenced in with high planking, so that it was not visible to the passers-by on the roads that surrounded the camp on three sides. Experienced instructors were supplied by the Supreme Headquarters of the I.N.A. At first the instructors took rather an attitude of indifference, thinking that women could never carry out military training or be amenable to military discipline. But it did not take long for them to realise that they were under a misconception. The recruits reacted admirably and within a short time showed marked smartness in dress, bearing of arms and obedience to orders. The matter of dress was experimented upon, as also foot-wear and headgear and after a time these were settled. For their dress, for daily work a full-size blouse, long trousers and socks, and for ceremonial parades breeches, were approved; for foot-wear, ankle-boots with



buckles and straps were found to be more suitable; the cap of the I.N.A. was approved for headgear. Many of the women willingly cut short their hair, while some used nets to hold theirs. The women, who were shy and modest and rather awkward in holding arms, soon got out of their shyness, became alert and wielded their arms smartly. This was greatly helped by their discarding the *sari* and putting on the khaki uniform like the men. It was found that the ordinary Lee-Enfield 303 rifle was rather too big for them (most of the women belonged to South India), so it was arranged to obtain either the Ross pattern (Canadian) or the Dutch type of rifle, as was used in Indonesia. These were lighter and shorter but these had one disadvantage—the bayonet could not be fixed on many of these types of rifles; so instead of bayonets they carried short swords. On the afternoon of the 22nd Oct., 1943, preparations were complete for the formal opening of the 'Training Camp of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment in Waterloo Street, Singapore. There was a big gathering in the Camp where the guests had come on special invitation. There was a great rush of people at the gate of the Camp and it was difficult to keep them under control. Netaji addressed the gathering, and the following is an extract from his speech:

"You all know, as well as I do, the part our women at home have played in the Freedom Movement, especially during the last twenty-two years, since the year 1921, when the Congress was reborn under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. It is not only in connection with the Congress movement of Civil Disobedience, but also in connection with the secret revolutionary movement, that our sisters have played a notable part.

"In fact, it will be no exaggeration for me to say that there is no sphere of public activity, no department of national endeavour, in which Indian women have not gladly and bravely shared, along with our men, the burden of our national struggle. Whether it is touring from village to

village without food and drink, whether it is lecturing at one meeting after another, whether it is carrying freedom's message from door to door, whether it is during election campaigns, or whether it is leading processions along public streets in defiance of official orders and in spite of lathi charges by the inhuman British police, or whether it is facing bravely imprisonment and persecution, insult and humiliation, nowhere have our women been found wanting.

"Our brave sisters have also played a prominent part in the secret revolutionary movement. They have shown that when the need arises they could, like their brothers, shoot very well. If to-day I express my fullest confidence in you, it is because I know what our women are capable of and therefore I say without the slightest exaggeration that there is no suffering which our sisters are not capable of enduring.

"Our past has been a great and glorious one. India could not have produced a heroine like the Rani of Jhansi if she did not have a glorious tradition.....

"I may at this juncture say a few words about the Rani of Jhansi. When the Rani of Jhansi started her fight her age was only twenty. You can easily imagine what it meant for a girl of twenty to ride a horse and wield her sword in open battle. You can easily realize what courage and spirit she must have had. The English Commander who fought against her said that 'she was the best and bravest of the rebels'.....

"If there is anyone here or elsewhere who thinks that it is an unwomanly act to shoulder a rifle, I would ask her to turn to the pages of our history. What had our brave women done in the past? What did the brave Rani of Jhansi do in the Revolution of 1857, India's First War of Independence? Therefore in the last and final war of Independence we want not one Rani of Jhansi, but thousands and thousands of Ranis of Jhansi. It is not the number of rifles you may carry or the number of shots you may fire

which is important. Equally important is the moral effect of your brave example."

The whole gathering of men and women was thrilled. They cheered lustily. The women were greatly excited; their faces shone. The opening of the Training Camp of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was a landmark in the history of the Indian Independence Movement in South-east Asia. Women of all castes, creeds and provinces of India joined up. There were Tamils, Telegus, Malayalis, Bengalees, Gurkhas, Sikhs, Muslims and Christians. Singapore was the beginning. Another Camp was opened in Bangkok and yet another, later on, in Rangoon.

As time passed, training was intensified. Like the men, they had to take physical training early in the morning, and military drill and parades in the forenoon as well as in the early afternoon. After that, games were played. After a time it was found that it was necessary to have N.C.O's and Officers of their own sex. So examinations were held from time to time and selections made for N.C.O's and Officers. The first Officer selected was Dr. (now Lt.-Col.) Laxmi Swaminathan, who was appointed the first Commandant of the Regiment. In the early stages, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was in charge of the General Secretary (Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji) of the Indian Independence League Headquarters, Singapore. Later, when the training of the first batch was completed, they were absorbed into the I.N.A. as one of its Units and came under the direct control of the Supreme Headquarters of the I.N.A. The maximum strength of the Regiment in Singapore was about 500.

As it was decided to train a certain number of women for Nursing, volunteers were called for and training was given to them in the hospitals of the Azad Hind Fauj. A curriculum covering four months' training was drawn up by Lt.-Col. (now Col.) Kasliwal and approved by the D.M.S., Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) A. D. Loganadan, and arrangements were made for their training in the hospital at Bidadari in Singapore. The nurses were daily taken from their camp

to the hospital and brought back again in the evening, except for those who were kept on for night duty. It was an intensive course, but when after its completion the probationary nurses were examined, the results were highly satisfactory. This was still further proved when they actually went to Burma and served in the Base and Advance Base Hospitals in Rangoon, Mandalay, and Memyo. The Medical Officers as well as the patients themselves were highly pleased with the efficiency of their work and their devotion to the patients.

One remarkable experience we have gathered as a result of carrying out training and the successful work in the field which these trained nurses carried out is that it has revolutionized our ideas about the methodology and the time of training that had been considered necessary for the training of nurses required for ordinary purposes. It seems to us, who have actually seen them at work, that it is a sheer waste of time and most unhelpful in national reconstruction work if we insist on the present methodology and time of three years for training those nurses who would ordinarily be working in small hospitals in the rural areas. We shall have to effect a radical change in the training of the nurses if we want to achieve anything within a measurable period of time and give help to the tens of millions of our people who stand in need of their services.

---

## CHAPTER IX

### FORMATION OF PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF FREE INDIA

Whenever a subject nation has tried to regain its independence, it has had to organize a Central Authority to co-ordinate and direct all the activities of its nationals to that goal. From a study of the history of the world we can see that in the struggle for freedom by the different nations some such central authority has been formed at different stages. At the initial stage this central authority might perhaps be an Association, or a League, a Federation or a Council of Action, but as the movement develops and its activities increase in volume and variety, it becomes necessary to organize this central authority in a more efficient and elaborate manner.

In the successful organization of such an authority, four things are essential: (1) men, (2) money, (3) material, and above all (4) an indomitable spirit of unity, faith and sacrifice for the achievement of the object. Material is necessary, but the spirit is essential and must be the driving force for the proper utilisation of the material in all the spheres. Materials, money and men may be replaced, but if the spirit breaks down once, it becomes very difficult to raise the *morale* of the men, whether they are actually fighting or are helpers in the cause, particularly the former. Inculcation of this spirit during the training of every kind of personnel, especially those who are taking an active part in such a movement, and more especially those who fight for the freedom of their country is, therefore, of the utmost importance. Special provision should be made for intensive spiritual training. Every fighter for freedom must intelligently understand the significance of the cause for which he is fighting. Mere blind following of the leader cannot

produce the same result as moral conviction based on intelligent understanding of the cause which the leader puts forward before his people. Blind faith does indeed produce brave deeds, but these are surpassed by those that are done by persons who fight with moral conviction. It is for this reason that every intelligent leader has put so much emphasis on the power of the spirit and insists on spiritual training for his men in order to develop that power. Napoleon Bonaparte, who is one of the greatest soldiers the world has ever produced, repeatedly said, "Spirit and sword are both necessary in battle, but the spirit dominates the sword." It is the Central authority alone which can efficiently inculcate this spirit into its people. Again, it is the Central authority which can take every possible measure to make its people understand as intelligently as possible the significance of the struggle which it directs. Moreover, the people, too, are more likely to listen to a properly constituted Central authority rather than anybody else.

If the Central authority succeeds to a certain extent, and if it is to carry the struggle to a successful conclusion, it must develop sooner or later into a Provisional Government for the country concerned. The sooner it is possible to bring this Provisional Government into being, the better it is. It may start within the country itself or be established outside the country. A Provisional Government can only be established within the country when sufficient preparation, including armed organization, has been made beforehand. Without popular support it cannot last very long; even so, the existing authority will make every effort to crush it, and is more likely than not to succeed in doing so particularly when there is no help from outside, and much more so in these days of modern mechanical warfare.

In our first struggle for independence in 1857, the non-formation of a Provisional Government to co-ordinate and direct the activities of the different leaders engaged in fighting for the freedom of our country was one of the

greatest causes of the ultimate failure of that struggle. Another advantage of forming a Provisional Government is that it impresses the enemy far more than when the struggle is carried on by a number of individual leaders. He is likely to pay more respect and consideration to the matters arising out of the struggle, when it has to deal with a Provisional Government than when it has to deal with individual leaders. A still further advantage of a Provisional Government is that it can negotiate with another Government on different matters, such as help for finance, armament, equipment, location of bases etc. Moreover, if it is recognized by other nations, it still more impresses the enemy against whom the fight for freedom has to be carried on. Another outstanding advantage is that the recognition of a Provisional Government by other nations gives it an international status, and its struggle for freedom comes out of the field of domestic dispute and passes on to the plane of international politics. Again, with such international recognition of the Provisional Government the spirit of its own people is greatly strengthened and they are impressed more and more with its significance. Finally, if at some stage of the struggle the forces of the Provisional Government are compelled to withdraw from its territory, it can pass on to another friendly territory from which it can direct its operations and thus continue the struggle for a much longer period. So, from every point of view, in a struggle for freedom it is essential to form and establish a Provisional Government. The last function of a Provisional Government would naturally be, after the successful achievement of its object, that is, freedom of its country, to help the nation form and establish a permanent Government of the people's own choice and hand over to that permanent Government all the functions and powers of the Provisional Government itself.

It was because of these important considerations that our beloved Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose conceived the

idea of formation and establishment of the *Arzi Hukumat-e Azad Hind* (Provisional Government of Free India). This was his master-stroke. During our struggle for the freedom of our country in South-east Asia, he consulted us about its establishment and finally formed his first Cabinet and established the Provisional Government on the 21st October, 1943.

The formation of the Provisional Government of Free India was proclaimed on the same date in the great auditorium of the Cathay Cinema building in Singapore at a conference of the delegates of the Indian Independence Leagues of South-east Asia convened especially for the purpose. These accredited representatives came from Malaya, Java, Sumatra, Siam, Indo-China and Hongkong. The day shall ever remain an outstanding landmark in the history of India's struggle for freedom. The large hall was packed to capacity and there was a large overflow in the corridors and outside the building.

At first the author, as General Secretary of the Indian Independence League, read a brief report of the work done in the past by the League. Then Netaji rose. He was given the most rousing cheers for minutes together. He then announced the personnel of the first Cabinet of the Azad Hind Government as mentioned below:—

1. Subhas Chandra Bose—Head of the State, Prime Minister and Minister for War, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Supreme Commander of the Indian National Army.
2. H. E. Capt. Laxmi Swaminathan  
—Women's Organization.
3. H. E. A. S. Iyer—Publicity & Propaganda.
4. H. E. Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji—Finance.



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 5. H. E. Lt.-Col. Aziz Ahmed Khan                      | } <i>Representatives of<br/>the Armed Forces</i> |
| 6. H. E. Lt.-Col. N. S. Bhagat                         |  |
| 7. H. E. Lt.-Col. J. K. Bhonsle                        |  |
| 8. H. E. Lt.-Col. Gulzara Singh                        |  |
| 9. H. E. Lt.-Col. M. Z. Kiani                          |  |
| 10. H. E. Lt.-Col. A. D. Loganathan                    |  |
| 11. H. E. Lt.-Col. Ehsan Qadir                         | } <i>Advisers</i>                                |
| 12. H. E. Lt.-Col. Shah Nawaz Khan                     |  |
| 13. H. E. A. M. Sahay—Secretary with Ministerial Rank. |  |
| 14. Rash Behari Bose—Supreme Adviser.                  |  |
| 15. Karim Gani   |  |
| 16. Debnath Das  |  |
| 17. D. M. Khan   | }  |
| 18. J. Thivy   |  |
| 19. Iswar Singh  |  |
| 20. A. Yellappa  |  |
| 21. A. N. Sircar—Legal Adviser.                        |  |

He then read out the following Proclamation of Independence on behalf of the Azad Hind Cabinet:—

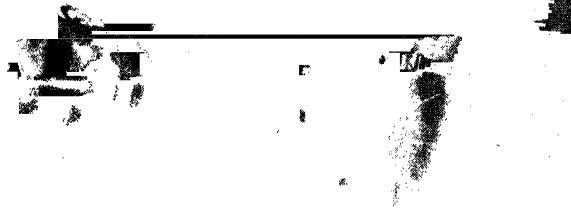
"After their first defeat at the hands of the British in 1757 in Bengal, the Indian people fought an uninterrupted series of hard and bitter battles over a stretch of one hundred years. The history of this period teems with examples of unparalleled heroism and self-sacrifice. And, in the pages of that history, the names of Siraj-ud-daula and Mohanlal of Bengal, Haider Ali, Tipoo Sultan and Velu Tampi of South India, Appa Sahib Bhonsle and Peshwa Baji Rao of Maharashtra, the Begums of Oudh, Sardar Shyam Singh Atariwala of Punjab and, last but not least, Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi, Tantia Topi, Maharaj Kunwar Singh of Dumraon and Nana Sahib—among others—the names of all these warriors are for ever engraved in letters of gold.

"Unfortunately for us, our forefathers did not at first realise that the British constituted a grave threat to the whole of India and they did not therefore put up a united





Maj. General M. Z. Kiani—Commander, No. 1 Division.



Maj. General Shah Nawaz Khan.

front against the enemy. Ultimately, when the Indian people were roused to the reality of the situation, they made a concerted move—and under the flag of Bahadur Shah in 1857, they fought their last war as free men. In spite of a series of brilliant victories in the early stages of this war, ill-luck and faulty leadership gradually brought about their final collapse and subjugation. Nevertheless, such heroes as the Rani of Jhansi, Tantia Topi, Kunwar Singh and Nana Sahib live like eternal stars in the nation's memory to inspire us to greater deeds of sacrifice and valour.

“Forcibly disarmed by the British after 1857 and subjected to terror and brutality, the Indian people lay prostrate for a while—but with the birth of the Indian National Congress in 1885, there came a new awakening. From 1885 till the end of the last World War, the Indian people, in their endeavour to recover their lost liberty, tried all possible methods—namely, agitation and propaganda, boycott of British goods, terrorism and sabotage and finally armed revolution. But all these efforts failed for a time. Ultimately, in 1920, when the Indian people, haunted by a sense of failure, were groping for a new method, Mahatma Gandhi came forward with the new weapon of Non-co-operation and Civil Disobedience.

“For two decades thereafter, the Indian people went through a phase of intense patriotic activity. The message of freedom was carried to every Indian home. Through personal example, people were taught to suffer, to sacrifice and to die in the cause of freedom. From the centre to the remotest villages, the people were knit together into one political organization. Thus, the Indian people not only recovered their political consciousness, but became a political entity once again. They could now speak with one voice and strive with one will for one common goal. From 1937 to 1939, through the work of the Congress Ministries in eight provinces, they gave proof of their readiness and capacity to administer their own affairs.

"Thus, on the eve of the present World War, the stage was set for the final struggle for India's liberation. During the course of this war, Germany with the help of her allies has dealt shattering blows to our enemy in Europe—while Nippon, with the help of her allies, has inflicted a knock-out blow to our enemy in East Asia. Favoured by a most happy combination of circumstances, the Indian people to-day have a wonderful opportunity for achieving their national emancipation.

"For the first time in recent history, Indians abroad have also been politically roused and united in one organization. They are not only thinking and feeling in tune with their countryman at home, but are also marching in step with them, along the path to freedom. In East Asia, in particular, over two million Indians are now organized as one solid phalanx, inspired by the slogan of 'total mobilization.' And in front of them stand the serried ranks of India's Army of Liberation, with the slogan *Onward to Delhi* on their lips.

"Having goaded Indians to desperation by its hypocrisy and having driven them to starvation and death by plunder and loot, British rule in India has forfeited the good-will of the Indian people altogether and is now living a precarious existence. It needs but a flame to destroy the last vestige of that unhappy rule. To light that flame is the task of India's Army of Liberation. Assured of the enthusiastic support of the civil population at home and also of a large section of Britain's Indian Army and backed by gallant and invincible allies abroad, but relying in the first instance on its own strength, India's Army of Liberation is confident of fulfilling its historic role.

"Now that the dawn of freedom is at hand, it is the duty of the Indian people to set up a Provisional Government of their own, and launch the last struggle under the banner of that Government. But with all the Indian leaders in prison and the people at home totally disarmed, it is not possible to set up a Provisional Government within

India or to launch an armed struggle under the aegis of that Government. It is, therefore, the duty of the Indian Independence League in East Asia, supported by all patriotic Indians at home and abroad to undertake this task—the task of setting up a Provisional Government of Azad Hind (Free India) and of conducting the last fight for freedom—with the help of the Army of Liberation (that is, the Azad Hind Fauj or the Indian National Army) organized by the League.

“Having been constituted as the Provisional Government of Azad Hind by the Indian Independence League in East Asia, we enter upon our duties with a full sense of the responsibility that has devolved on us. We pray that Providence may bless our work and our struggle for the emancipation of our Motherland. And we hereby pledge our lives and the lives of our comrades-in-arms to the cause of her freedom, of her welfare, and her exaltation among the nations of the world.

“It will be the task of the Provisional Government to launch and to conduct the struggle that will bring about the expulsion of the British and of their allies from the soil of India. It will then be the task of the Provisional Government to bring about the establishment of a permanent National Government of Azad Hind constituted in accordance with the will of the Indian people and enjoying their confidence. After the British and their allies are overthrown and until a permanent National Government of Azad Hind is set up on Indian soil, the Provisional Government will administer the affairs of the country in trust for the Indian people.

“The Provisional Government is entitled to, and hereby claims, the allegiance of every Indian. It guarantees religious liberty as well as equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens. It declares its firm resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts, cherishing all the children of the

nation equally and transcending all the differences cunningly fostered by an alien Government in the past.

"In the name of God, in the name of bygone generations who have welded the Indian people into one nation and in the name of the dead heroes who have bequeathed to us a tradition of heroism and self-sacrifice—we call upon the Indian people to rally round our banner and to strike for India's Freedom. We call upon them to launch the final struggle against the British and all their allies in India and to prosecute that struggle with valour and perseverance and with full faith in Final Victory until the enemy is expelled from Indian soil and the Indian people are once again a free nation."

Signed on behalf of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind :—

Subhas Chandra Bose, Head of the State, Prime Minister and Minister for War, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Supreme Commander of the Indian National Army.

Capt. Miss Lakshmi (Women's Organization), S. A. Ayer (Publicity and Propaganda), Lt.-Col. A. C. Chatterji (Finance), Lt.-Col. Aziz Ahmed, Lt.-Col. N. S. Bhagat, Col. J. K. Bhonsle, Lt.-Col. Gulzara Singh, Lt.-Col. M. Z. Kiani, Lt.-Col. A. D. Loganathan, Lt.-Col. Ehsan Qadir, Lt.-Col. Shah Nawaz (Representatives of the Armed Forces); A. M. Sahay, Secretary (with Ministerial Rank); Rash Behari Bose (Supreme Adviser); Karim Gani, Debnath Das, D. M. Khan, A. Yellappa, J. Thivy, Sardar Ishar Singh (Advisers); A. N. Sarkar (Legal Adviser).

Then the ceremony of taking the Oath of Allegiance commenced in a charged atmosphere. First rose Netaji and took the Oath of Allegiance to India. The prolonged and jubilant cheers reverberated throughout the huge hall. Netaji solemnly read out the Oath in a low but soft and yet firm voice :

“In the name of God, I take this sacred oath that to liberate India and 38 crores of my country men, I, Subhas Chandra Bose, will continue this sacred war of freedom till the last breath of my life...” At this point he was visibly moved. His eyes glistened and became filled with tears and his voice failed. He was silent for a while. The whole audience with their eyes fixed on him, with their breaths bated in tense expectation, waited for him to overcome the great emotion. There was pindrop silence. Netaji began again slowly in a solemn voice :

“I shall always remain a servant of India and look after the welfare of 38 crores of Indian brothers and sisters. This shall be for me my highest duty. Even after winning freedom I will always be prepared to shed the last drop of my blood for the preservation of India’s freedom.” The huge audience felt relieved.

Then each member of the Provisional Government came forward on the dias in front of the audience. Each of them individually solemnly took the Oath: “In the name of God I take this holy oath that to liberate India and 38 crores of my countrymen I will be absolutely faithful to our leader Subhas Chandra Bose, and shall always be prepared to sacrifice my life and all I have for the cause.”

The first Cabinet meeting was held the same night.

The Government of the following independent nations recognized officially the Provisional Government of Free India :

1. Germany: Herr Von Ribbentrop, the Foreign Minister of the German Reich was the first to send official felicitations in recognition of our Government.

2. Croatia.

3. China (Nanking Government).

4. Manchukuo.

5. Philippines.

6. Burma.



7. Italy : Signor Mussolini sent official felicitations in recognition of our Free Government.

8. Japan : Foreign Minister Momoru Shigemetsu sent the most cordial felicitations on behalf of the Imperial Japanese Government recognizing our Government. In addition he sent his own personal greetings to Netaji.

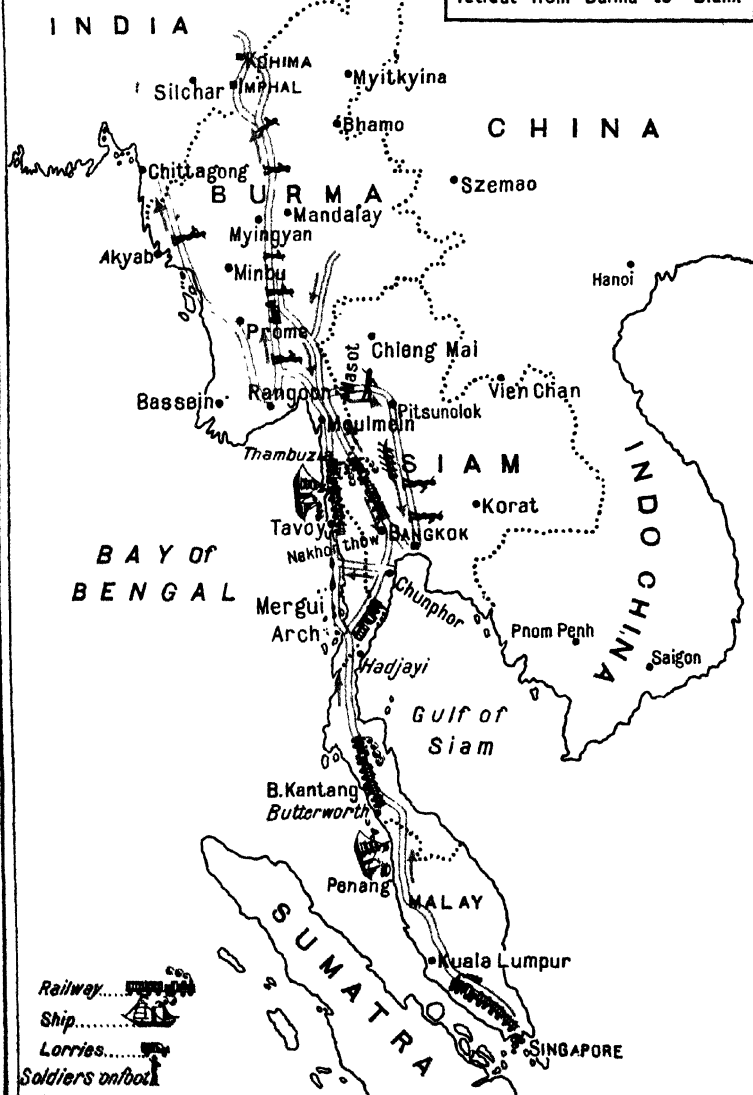
9. Siam.

Eamon de Valera, President of the Irish Free State, sent his personal cordial felicitations to Netaji on the occasion of the formation of the Provisional Government of Free India.

---



Showing the line of advance of the Azad Hind Fouj from Singapore to India and the line of retreat from Burma to Siam.



## CHAPTER X

# PREPARATIONS FOR THE CAMPAIGN FOR LIBERATION OF INDIA

### A. In Malaya:

On the night of the 22nd October, 1943, the second Cabinet meeting of the Provisional Government of Free India was held at Netaji's residence and at 12 o'clock midnight it was decided that war should be declared against the Anglo-American Powers. The Cabinet authorized its Prime Minister, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, to do so. That very night Netaji declared war against the Anglo-American Powers over the radio in Singapore, but no war was declared against Russia or China.

On the afternoon of the 23rd October a huge mass rally of Indian people was held on the maidan in Singapore, in which the Azad Hind Fauj also participated. Netaji addressed the gathering in Hindusthani and told them that on the previous night the Provisional Government of Free India had declared war against the Anglo-American Powers. He wanted the Indian people to ratify the Government's decision. Both the troops as well as the civilians got excited and with arms raised above their heads, and holding their rifles aloft, moved *en masse* towards the dias on which Netaji was standing. It seemed as if the whole congregation had become hypnotized and was gradually being pulled towards him. No one who had not witnessed that sight could imagine that such movement of a large mass of people towards one focal point, as if a magnet were drawing pieces of iron, was possible. It almost compared with a scene similar to that of a snake-charmer charming a huge-hooded cobra. The whole gathering was completely charmed and advanced towards

the high platform on which he was standing, and as they advanced, they danced and shouted with joy. It was a most wonderful sight. Those of us who were standing on the platform with him could hardly realize what was happening. Some of us tried to stop the crowd from rushing on to the platform, but Netaji dissuaded us. He said, "Let them come." When they came to the foot of the platform and near the stairs, Netaji just raised his arm, and the entire crowd stopped dead. If there were any proof required of personal magnetism and hypnotic influence over a huge mass of humanity, it was here that it was conclusively demonstrated. The whole gathering stood charmed—men, women and the soldiers. It was a sight unique in the history of any nation in the world.

*The Provisional Government* : It was formed out of its parent organization, the Indian Independence League of East and South-east Asia. When once it was formed, it became the supreme organ controlling all the activities pertaining to the Independence Movement in South-east Asia, including Burma. Thus it controlled the Indian Independence League as well as the Indian National Army. Netaji had already re-organized the Azad Hind Fauj. He had abolished the Military Bureau. The different departments of the Army had been re-organized, and an Officers' Training School had been established. Two Divisions had been fully trained and armed, while the third was under training and formation. Recruitment for two more Divisions was started and people came forward in overwhelming numbers.

In the beginning the following four Departments of the Provisional Government were established :—

1. Department of Finance.

Minister-in-Charge: Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Genl.)  
A. C. Chatterji.

2. Department of Publicity and Propaganda.

Minister-in-Charge : S. C. Iyer.

### 3. Department of Women's Affairs.

Minister-in-Charge : Dr. (now Lt.-Col.) Laxmi Swaminathan.

### 4. Department of War.

Minister-in-Charge : Netaji himself.

Ministers of State who came from the Military Department did not hold any separate portfolio, but acted as principal advisers in the Cabinet in all military matters.

The Provisional Government appointed the following Sub-Committees to make recommendations to the Cabinet pertaining to the matters which were entrusted to them :—

(1) NATIONAL PLANNING SUB-COMMITTEE : It took up the following questions :—

(a) *Common Language* : It was decided that the common language would be the simplest Hindusthani. In other words, it would be the language ordinarily spoken by the common people, devoid of highflown Sanskrit, Persian, or Arabic words as far as possible. In order to avoid all controversy regarding the script, the Roman alphabet was adopted.

(b) *Common Dress* : For the civilian this was divided into categories : (i) for day-to-day work :

A. *Men* : shirts and shorts; suitable footwear; hat made of straw, cloth or pith.

B. *Women* : Saree was adopted as the common mode of dress with a short blouse for the upper part of the body, and a suitable footwear.

(ii) for ceremonial purposes and on festival occasions : people could put on their own provincial dresses.

(c) *Common mode of Address* : When two persons met 'Jai Hind' was adopted as the common mode of address in place of all denominational, religious or foreign modes of address.

(d) *Common salutation* : Opinion on this was divided, but the majority agreed that people would raise their right arm and touch the right temple with the tip of their fingers

with the palm downwards. This method would be adopted both by the civilians as well as by the military. But if a military person was bareheaded, he would just stand to attention and say 'Jai Hind'.

(2) DECORATION AND MEDAL SUB-COMMITTEE: It took up the question of devising decorations and medals for both military as well as civilian workers. The undermentioned medals and decorations were established; these are mentioned in order of precedence :—

A. *Military:*

1. *Shaheed-e-Bharat*
2. *Sher-e-Hind*
3. *Sardar-e-Jang*
4. *Vir-e-Hind*
5. *Tamgha-e-Bahaduri*
6. *Tamgha-e-Shatrunash*

There were two classes of *Sardar-e-Jang* Medal according to the standard of individual bravery, devotion to duty and leadership exhibited in the field.

Members of the Azad Hind Fauj who rendered meritorious and commendable service in the field but fell short of qualifying for a decoration, were to be awarded the certificate *Sana-e-Bahaduri* by the Head of the State, Provisional Government of Azad Hind.

There were two classes of *Tamgha-e-Shatrunash*:

Class I, to be awarded for exhibiting conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty in killing or capturing alive any British or American officer or other rank either in single combat or in group fighting where qualities of individual initiative and individual bravery came into play.

Class II, to be awarded for killing or capturing alive any British or American officer or other rank either in single combat or in group fighting where qualities of individual bravery came into play.

The medal of *Tamgha-e-Shatrunash* might be awarded to any person other than a member of the Azad Hind Fauj, whether outside India or inside, both for killing or captur-

ing alive any British or American soldier or non-military personnel who was clearly an enemy in the path of India's freedom.

### B. Civilian :

Similar decorations were established for the civilian workers, for example, the people of the Azad Hind Dal and others. There were three such decorations, the highest being *Shevak-e-Hind* which was awarded to those who were really total mobilizers, that is, they donated everything they possessed and offered themselves for the service of the country.

(3) PAY, ALLOWANCES AND PENSIONS SUB-COMMITTEE: It took up the question of fixing the amount of pocket money—in Malaya and in Burma—that should be given to all ranks of the Army and any special allowances that might be given for special kinds of work. It also fixed the scale of pension and reward :

I. To all persons who (i) were disabled on account of (a) battle casualty, (b) disease due to military service, (c) survived the campaign;

II. To the families of those who were killed (i) as a result of enemy action, (ii) by disease due to military service.

The recommendations of the Sub-Committees, after discussion and with certain amendments, were finally approved by the Cabinet. The following were the scales of pocket money fixed for the above purposes :—

<i>Designation</i>	<i>Pocket Money in Malaya. (in dollars)</i>	<i>Pocket Money in Burma. (in dollars)</i>
1. Sepoy ..	.. 26	30
2. Lance Naik ..	.. 28	32
3. Naik ..	.. 32	37
4. Havildar ..	.. 40	50
5. Sub-Officer ..	.. 60	70
6. 2nd Lieutenant ..	.. 70	80
7. Lieutenant ..	.. 80	100



<i>Designation</i>	<i>Pocket Money in Malaya. (in dollars)</i>	<i>Pocket Money in Burma. (in dollars)</i>
8. Captain ..	100	120
9. Major ..	120	150
10. Lieutenant-Colonel ..	170	225
11. Colonel ..	280	330
12. Major General ..	380	420

It is worth mentioning that when the question of pensions and rewards was considered, it was definitely decided that it would be applicable to all those martyrs and heroes and to their families who had sacrificed their lives or had suffered in India since the beginning of the struggle for freedom and not only to the personnel of the Azad Hind Fauj. It was also decided that the scale of pension either for the person concerned or for the family of the deceased, would be an adequate one and not merely a pittance as in the case of the Sepoys and V. C. O.'s in the British Indian Army. In the case of the Sepoy the basic amount of pension was fixed at Rs. 20 per month.

After the formation of the Provisional Government of Free India, I submitted proposals to Netaji for the establishment of a Training College for Civil Administrators. It was imperative that we should have a corps of these officers in order to tackle the problems of the liberated areas as soon as they were taken over by the Azad Hind Fauj. We were confident that we would get a great deal of support from the local officials when we entered the country, but still we had to provide for emergencies and particularly for the period immediately after military occupation when many of them might have either fled or might be in hiding for a time and when there was bound to be a lot of confusion. Netaji approved of the idea. A Department of Reconstruction was established and was put in charge of A. N. Sarkar. A college was established under this Department at Barker Road, not far away from the Headquarters of the Indian Independence League office, for

the training of civil administrators. A. N. Sarkar was put in charge of the Training College for which a suitable curriculum was drawn up. Similar arrangements were made for the training of police officers and men. In the Reconstruction Department persons with suitable qualifications and experience were enlisted for working the different Departments to be established in the liberated areas, such as, engineers, doctors, lawyers, mechanics, electricians, fitters, etc.

In November, 1943, Netaji next took up the controversial question of the Flag and the Song. He decided, with the approval of all concerned, that the Flag should remain as it was, that is, the Tricolour without the Charka. As there was stronger objection to the song because of mis-representation and the difficulty of understanding the language of the song, he ultimately decided to evolve something new which would be acceptable to all concerned irrespective of caste, creed, or race. A sub-committee was appointed to go into the matter, call for new compositions and judge them. Finally, a song *Subha Sukha Chainki Barkha Barse* was composed by a young Muslim named Hussain and was approved. It was most willingly accepted by all concerned and became extremely popular. The new song, although to a great extent based upon Tagore's song *Jana Gana Mana Adhinayaka*, differed greatly from the latter in its wording and meaning. Netaji rewarded Hussain with ten thousand dollars for his effort in evolving the new national song.

Netaji had written to the trustees to the Chettiar temple, located at Tank Road, Singapore, for contributions. They replied they would be willing to contribute to the funds of the Indian Independence Movement provided Netaji went to their temple and spoke there. He replied to them that the temple was a place of worship and every man was free to worship as he liked, but that religion should not be mixed up with matters of State and therefore he did not like the idea of going to the temple to ask for

funds which were required for the Independence Movement. But on their urgent repeated requests he said that as a special case he would consider the matter if the authorities of the Trust on their part were willing to allow Netaji to take with him his officers irrespective of caste, creed and religion. If they objected to the presence in the temple of persons of other denominations, Netaji would not go to the temple, and he would not mind if for that reason the trustees withheld their contributions. After a few days a miracle happened. The trustees wrote back to Netaji accepting the condition that he could take with him to the temple, officers and men irrespective of caste, creed and religion. This was a very remarkable departure in the history of the temple. In due course Netaji went to the temple accompanied by his Muslim, Hindu, Sikh and Christian officers. They went not only into the inner courtyard of the temple where previously non-Hindus were not allowed to enter, but they even went close to the door of the *sanctus sanctorum* where only Brahmins could set their foot. This was an even more remarkable incident in the annals of the temple. Not only this, but the Brahmin priest of the temple put *tilakas* (marks) over the foreheads of Netaji and the officers irrespective of caste, creed and religion, and gave them the *prosad* (oblations) of the deity. The officers in their turn willingly accepted the *tilaka* on their foreheads and gladly partook of the *prosad* offered to them. By such acts the Hindus did not become less Hindu, nor the Muslims or Christians or Sikhs any the less Muslims, Christians or Sikhs. What did happen, however, was that they all raised the plane of human relationships to a higher level. Their love and respect for one another increased manifold. That is how it should be all the world over. Netaji and his officers, and other guests, were then entertained to tea and light refreshments in a part of the temple where Netaji made a remarkable speech explaining what the Movement signified and stressed upon unity amongst the followers of the different creeds and religions

of India and the significance of universal brotherhood. There was a glow in the faces of all which radiated mutual love and respect. This was a very happy inauguration of a deep sense of fellow-feeling between people of all denominations who had joined the Independence Movement, which increased more and more as time went on.

Netaji always stressed upon the practical development of love and respect between officers and men of all denominations. He specially emphasized that Hindu officers should join the Muslim officers and men in their festivities such as the Id, and on the other hand Muslim officers should make it a point to join the Hindu festivities like the Dewali. On such occasions, whenever possible, Hindu officers should invite Muslim officers on the day of celebration of the Id, while the Muslim officers should invite Hindu officers on the celebration of the Dewali day. The result was that we Hindu officers went into the mosque and listened to the *khatam dawa* on that day, participated in the festivities and enjoyed the food served to us on the occasion. Similar was the case with the Muslim officers on the Dewali day. Likewise, Hindu and Muslim officers along with their Sikh brother officers went to the Sikh Gurdwaras; and Hindu and Sikh Officers along with their Muslim brother officers enjoyed the lavish entertainment given to them in a luncheon party in a mosque. Thus gradually a sense of tolerance, love and respect for each other increased more and more.

From time to time the new Cabinet met and transacted business. Preparations were started to send units to Burma. It was decided to send the first Division as early as possible. Units which were re-formed and re-organized started to move both from Singapore and from the mainland of Malaya. They proceeded by train. Beyond the Malayan Peninsula, part of the journey was made by train and part on foot and some of these troops made the journey partly by boat and partly by motor truck. The journey was done through areas severely infested with malaria and

long marches had to be undertaken. In many instances proper sanitary arrangements and protection against malaria were not available with the result that a large number of people reached Burma either weakened by malaria or by dysentery and very often by both. But after they reached Burma they recovered fairly quickly.

In November, 1943, invitation was received by Netaji from the Imperial Japanese Government to attend the Greater East Asia Conference which was to be held in Tokyo in the same month. He agreed to accept the invitation but only as an observer. Before he went to Tokyo, he made it clear to the Japanese Government that he would attend the conference but would not commit himself in any way on behalf of his country under the present circumstances. This was agreed to by the Japanese Government. He went to Tokyo accompanied by Maj.-Gen. J. K. Bhonsle who was the Chief of the Staff of the I.N.A.; S. A. Iyer, Minister of Publicity and Propaganda; A. M. Sahay, Secretary to the Provisional Government of Free India; and Major Abid Hassan. Representatives of the following nations attended that conference: National Government of China, Empire of Manchukuo, Philippines, Siam, Burma, Provisional Government of Free India and Japan. Netaji spoke at the conference for over twenty minutes, and it is said that his speech was by far the best delivered on the occasion. As a result of the discussions three cardinal principles were accepted by all the nations concerned, which would govern their mutual dealings. These were:

1. Freedom.
2. Justice.
3. Reciprocity.

The conference lasted nearly five days and almost all the Prime Ministers of the different nations in East Asia expressed their determination for carrying on the Great East Asia War and their views regarding the Co-Prosperity Sphere of these Powers. Shortly after holding the main conference, Premier General Hideki Tojo announced in a

meeting of the conference that the Imperial Japanese Government had decided to hand over to the Provisional Government of Free India the sovereignty of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands which were then under Japanese occupation. He said that for the duration of war, mutual agreements would have to be arrived at with regard to the defence and administration of these islands. The Japanese Government promised to give all the necessary help in this connection.

An incident occurred during the conference which shows remarkably the real unselfish character of Netaji. Premier Tojo in a speech said that Netaji would be all-in-all in Free India. Netaji at once stood up and said that it was not for General Tojo to say that, because it was only the people of India who would decide who was to be who in India. Netaji told him that he himself was only a humble servant of his country. Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru were really the people who deserved to be all-in-all. Netaji's one ideal of life was service to his country, selfless and self-sacrificing. This remarkable incident clearly indicated the trend of his mind.

Netaji returned to Malaya *via* Shanghai where a great ovation was given to him by the Indian inhabitants of that area.

As mentioned before, when the Provisional Government of Free India was formed in Singapore, it established three Ministries which dealt with civilian work apart from that of the Foreign Ministry held by Netaji himself. The Ministry of Publicity and Propaganda took up the guidance, supervision and direction of such works which were previously being carried out by the Indian Independence League Headquarters.

In order that propaganda work might be carried out throughout Malaya on a comprehensive and co-ordinated basis, a course of training was organized at the Headquarters of the Malayan Branch of the Indian Independence

League at Singapore for the officers in charge of propaganda work in the State branches of the League in Malaya. A good number of such officers were trained and they successfully carried out their work when they went back to their respective areas.

A large number of special leaflets, pamphlets and posters were prepared under the direction of the Publicity and Propaganda Department of the Provisional Government of Free India in different languages in order to be made full use of in the impending campaign for the liberation of India. The Government also decided that the 21st of each month would be observed by all Indians of East and South-east Asia as the Provisional Government of Free India Day, and celebrated in a befitting manner. On this day every householder was to hoist the National Flag; public meetings were to be held; prayers were to be offered in places of worship; processions were to be taken out in the town etc. In order to secure the efficient production and distribution of the different newspapers printed under the guidance of the Ministry, the requisite staff was augmented in the offices of these newspapers. The Ministry took special measures to inform and guide the respective Publicity and Propaganda Branches of the Indian Independence League located in the different countries of East and South-east Asia. In addition to the leaflets etc., special messages were sent to the different branches of the Indian Independence Leagues on special occasions of national or international importance, such as, observance of the Provisional Government of Free India Day on the 21st of October and on the 21st of each month, Independence Day on the 26th January, Gandhiji's Birthday, Declaration of the Greater East Asia War etc. The Provisional Government took over the Broadcasting Station in Singapore and subsequently those at Saigon, Bangkok and Rangoon and even started one in Tokyo where special arrangements for an American programme was made in 1944. This intensive propaganda and publicity work aroused the public spirit

and brought before them forcefully the significance of the Independence Movement.

Under the Ministry of Finance, a Board of Management for raising funds for the Provisional Government of Free India was established in Singapore as Headquarters. It was to raise funds in the shape of either regular contributions or donations both in kind and in coin. It undertook to manage or dispose of movable as well as immovable property donated to the Provisional Government. It issued Savings Deposit Certificates for amounts deposited with the Board which were to be paid within three years after the conclusion of the war to the payee, either at the place of the deposit or in India as the Government decided. The Board of Management was constituted of representatives from different countries in East Asia excluding Burma. Malaya itself was divided into different regions in order that the collection might be as intensive as possible. The Board of Management co-operated with the League authorities who thereupon established a special department for the collection of funds. Periodical tours were undertaken by the members of the Board to visit areas where the work of collection lagged behind. Such visits greatly strengthened the hands of the local League members in raising funds. The Minister of Finance, who was also the Chairman of the Board, concurrently held the position of Secretary of the Finance Department of the Indian Independence League Headquarters, Singapore. This arrangement was very helpful as it greatly strengthened the drive for collection of funds, smoothed the working of the executive machinery and was also economical under the circumstances. The Finance Department of the League Headquarters was greatly strengthened. Account and Audit Branches were started and consolidated. Systematic audit of the different Branches was undertaken. Numerous donations received in kind, such as gold ornaments, silver articles, watches, rings, etc., were kept in safe custody. In order that the receipts for safe custody for the amounts



deposited could not be forged easily, receipt forms were specially printed with the Tricolour as the water mark. A special circular embossing seal was prepared showing India in outline and the words *Jai Hind* written across it. This seal was embossed on each receipt at the time of issue.

Netaji had asked for 30 millions from South-east Asia. More than double that amount was donated by the Indian public, leaving aside the amount contributed by those living in Burma.

The Minister-in-Charge of the Women's Department likewise strengthened the work of the Women's Branch in the Indian Independence League Headquarters. The greater portion of her work was, however, directed towards the recruitment and training of women volunteers for the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. She toured round Malaya and did excellent propaganda work amongst the women and roused their enthusiasm and feeling for the Freedom Movement.

The work of the Ministry of War as well as that of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was carried out by Netaji himself.

The Provisional Government encouraged the League Branches to establish Indian National Schools, the special features of which were the teaching of National History of India and Hindusthani.

After his return from Japan Netaji decided to visit the Shaheed and Swaraj Islands (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) in November, 1943. The sovereignty of these islands was transferred to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind by the Imperial Japanese Government. Accompanied by Ananda Mohan Sahay and Maj. Hasan, Netaji went to Andaman Island and landed in Port Blair. He was given a great reception by the Indian community there. A meeting was held and thousands of Indians gathered together and acclaimed Netaji. The Indian National Flag was hoisted by him as the emblem of Indian sovereignty

over the Islands. The islands were renamed Shaheed (Andaman) and Swaraj (Nicobar) Islands. He inspected the huge well-fortified barracks in which life-term prisoners, particularly those who were convicted for political offences, were confined. He was very happy to see that those whom the British had not been able to evacuate were now free and living as normal individuals. The Japanese had also set free other convicts who were being settled on the land for the production of food. He formally established the Indian Independence League in these islands. He appointed Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) A. D. Loganathan as the Chief Commissioner of these islands. The latter with his staff proceeded there and took over charge formally from the Japanese Military Administration in the name of the Provisional Government of Free India. Maj. Alwi, a very unassuming, level-headed and thoroughly reliable officer, acted as his second-in-command.

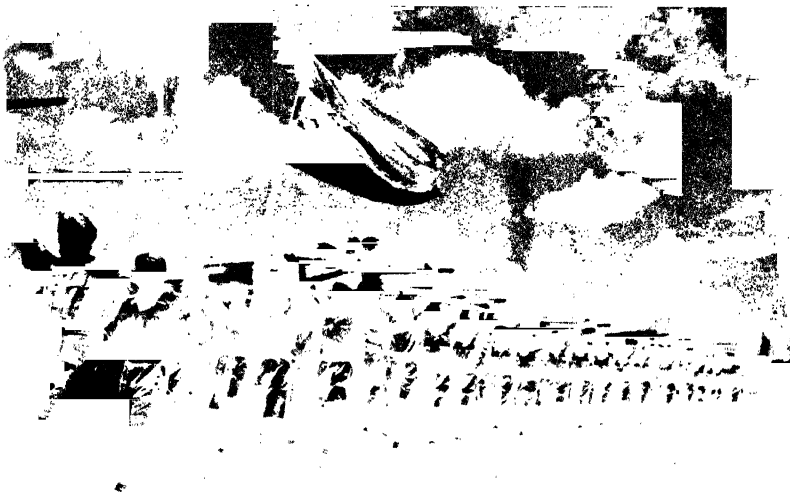
On account of the military situation Lt.-Col. Loganathan could not take complete control of the administration. He, therefore, directed his energies mainly towards the following: (1) Education, (2) Production of food, (3) Handicraft, (4) Propaganda and Publicity, (5) Civil Judicial work, (6) Women's work.

#### *Burma-Siamese Railway:*

News began to come regarding the deterioration of the condition of the Indian labourers who were being employed on the Burma-Siamese Railway. Reports were received of thousands having died of disease. Netaji sent Brahmachari Kailasam to go and investigate the matter and report. He himself also took up the matter with the Japanese authorities. He wanted to bring back the largest number of Indians that was possible, but the Japanese pleaded that the railway was essential for the maintenance of the army in Burma and, therefore, the contribution that was being made by Indians, although at the sacrifice of life, was in their mutual interest. They, therefore, requested

that the labour force should not be withdrawn. They further said that although the Chinese were very intelligent and capable, they could not be sufficiently trusted. The Malays were not sufficiently intelligent and not active enough to do the work expeditiously, while the Indians were intelligent, industrious, and completely reliable. Consequently, they preferred Indian labourers and promised to improve the conditions immediately. As a result of Netaji's efforts in this direction, conditions finally improved, but still much more remained to be done as the terrain was difficult, and as the resources were becoming more and more limited.

After visiting the Shaheed and Swaraj Islands, Netaji went over to Burma and landed in Rangoon. He made a brief stay there and called on Adi-padi Nagyndaw Dr. Ba Maw, President of the newly established Independent Burmese Republic. Netaji attended the marriage ceremony of the daughter of Dr. Ba Maw and on this occasion he placed at the disposal of Dr. Ba Maw a sum of five lacs of rupees. It was to be utilised for the welfare of the Burmese people. This free gift greatly impressed the Burmese people and Netaji received the cordial thanks of Dr. Ba Maw. He established cordial relations in respect of prosecution of the campaign on the Indo-Burma frontier for the liberation of India. The National Government of Burma readily agreed and promised to give every possible help in this matter. They fully realised that without the independence of India, Burma could not possibly maintain her own independence. Therefore it was in the mutual interest of both that they should join hands and unite in the common struggle. After settling the preliminaries regarding the location of the Headquarters of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, the I.N.A. and the Indian Independence League, he returned to Singapore. On his way back, he made a short halt at Bangkok. This visit was unofficial and he stayed at Ratnakosi Hotel. He, however, called on the new Prime Minister Maj. Khuong



"Qadam-Qadam-Barahae Ja....."  
I. N. A. Soldiers on the march.



"I. N. A. Armoured Cars".



Aphoywongse, and established cordial relations with the newly formed Government of Siam which were very helpful in the prosecution of the war of liberation of our Motherland.

Soon after his return from Rangoon, Netaji held Cabinet meetings and it was finally decided that the Headquarters of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and of the Indian Independence League should move to Burma as soon as possible. Accordingly these Headquarters moved to Rangoon soon after Netaji's return to that place towards the end of December, 1943. In the meanwhile troop movements to Burma had been started. The fourth guerilla regiment was formed in Taiping out of picked men mainly selected from the other three regiments in September, 1943. The officers and the men named it the Subhas Brigade, but Netaji did not like the idea. This regiment was ordered to move at once into Burma. The men were very happy when they got the orders to move. Yet they were not so well equipped as they ought to have been. The Japanese could not supply a great part of the equipment at short notice. Still every effort was made to equip the men as far as possible and arrangements were made for the onward despatch of the remainder of the supplies to Burma. But those who were sick or declared physically unfit by the medical officers were very much disappointed. They refused to be left behind. They laid themselves down on the rails in front of the railway engine and refused to budge from there. It was with the greatest difficulty that they could be persuaded to allow the train to move. This could be done only after a promise was given to them that they would also be sent to Burma as soon as possible.

The First Division under the command of Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) M. Z. Kiani, consisting of the three guerilla regiments, was also ordered to proceed to Burma. The troops were given a great send-off at the Singapore railway station. On the first occasion quite a large number of Indians gathered at the railway station. Later on, as a

precautionary measure against espionage the civilians were not informed of the troops' departure. Very often Netaji himself came and was given tremendous ovations. The wildest enthusiasm prevailed amongst the troops. Their faces glowed with the spirit of true national warriors. They seemed to have obtained at last what they were longing for four months. Large quantities of fruits and other food were provided for them by the local Indian Independence League. At Kuala Lumpur and other intermediate stations, they were given a great reception and provided with food by the Indian Independence League. Supply depots and hospitals were established along the line of communications for the provision of supplies and evacuation of the sick *en route*. The main stations were at Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Hedjai, Chumphon, Ye, Moulmein. Some of the troops went by train *via* Butterworth, Hedjai, Chumphon, Moulmein, and Rangoon. Some went by train as far as Butterworth and then went on board ships, passed Margui Archipelago along the coast of the Isthmus of Kra, and landed in Tavoy from where they partly marched and partly went by lorries up to Ye where they again took the train; while some others went by train up to Hedjai and crossed over to the west side of the Isthmus of Kra; of these some walked the whole distance to Ye while others partly walked and partly went by lorries. The transport arrangements made by the Japanese were not satisfactory. In the earlier stages they were responsible also for food and sanitation; the latter was very poor, with the result that a large number of our troops suffered from preventible diseases such as dysentery, malaria etc. As a result of this movement from Malaya to Rangoon, the troops broke down greatly in health and when they arrived in the latter place, hundreds of them were markedly reduced in health, emaciated and sick. They had to be given rest, proper treatment and nourishment before they were again fit for any great physical strain, let alone actual warfare.

Another Division (2nd) was raised in Malaya in November, 1943, which largely absorbed the old Hind Field Force and contained in addition a large number of civilians recruited and trained in Malaya.

S. A. Iyer submitted proposals for the formation of Field Propaganda units. Accordingly personnel were selected and they were put under training. Necessary equipment was collected together. They included different types of people such as announcers, designers for posters, draftsmen, writers, printers, wireless operators, etc. They were formed into semi-military units and had commanding officers with their assistants. The recruitment and training of these units took some time and unfortunately it was a bit late when they reached Burma after completion of the training, and thus could not be successfully used in the initial stages of the campaign.

#### B. IN BURMA:

##### *Provisional Government of Free India:*

With the removal of the Headquarters of the Provisional Government of Free India, all the Ministers moved to Burma excepting myself who was left behind in Malaya in charge of the Finance Department and for administering the work of the Indian Independence League in East and South-east Asia, excluding Burma. Netaji on arrival in Burma was given a tremendous reception which was attended not only by Indians but a large number of Burmese people also. The ovation given to him during his speech was remarkable. The Burmese were very much impressed by the excellent behaviour of the officers and men of the I. N. A. towards them. The anti-Indian feeling which had been so steadily and assiduously fostered by the British Government of Burma since 1931 was completely changed. The Burmese people realised that people of Free India would be their real friends, and that without a free India they could not keep their own independence.



With the establishment in Rangoon of the Headquarters of the Provisional Government of Free India, its different departments worked in the same way as they had done in Malaya. The Minister-in-charge of a department controlled the corresponding department of the League. His directives, instructions, and policies were carried out by the League.

*Netaji Fund Committee, Donations, Contributions:*

Netaji, after his arrival in Burma, laid stress on total mobilization of men, material, and money for the successful prosecution of the War of Independence. He repeatedly pointed out the urgent necessity of such mobilization. The people enthusiastically responded to his call. A special Committee to raise funds was established and it was named "Netaji Fund Committee". It was directly under the Provisional Government. Its first Chairman was Yellapah and its first Vice-Chairman was S. M. Bashir. This Committee made an intensive drive for the collection of contributions and donations, which were both in coin and kind. Later it was put under the control of the Minister of Revenue. The Burma Government, under the wise leadership of Nagyndaw Adipadi Dr. Ba Maw, gave the fullest facilities for this work. Quite a number of people became total mobilizers. Not only did they give all they possessed, but they also placed themselves and their services at the disposal of Netaji. The most prominent single individual amongst these was Habib Sahib, who contributed over a crore and three lakhs of rupees in jewellery, cash and property at one time. It was a unique occasion when he donated this fortune. At that time he also asked Netaji that in return for all these, which even included his cars, he wanted two things from him: (1) a pair of khaki uniforms which he would wear henceforth, (2) work to be given to him so that he might devote all his time to the Movement. Whole concerns, estates, and business organisations were put at the disposal of the Provisional

Government of Azad Hind. The most famous amongst these were the Ziyawadi Estates in Ziyawadi. Similarly B. Ghosh became a total mobilisator. He contributed all his material and the workshop, which were worth over a lakh of rupees, and placed his services at the disposal of Netaji. He was an engineer by profession, and made up his mind within a very short time when he was spoken to by Netaji. In yet another instance in a public meeting Sreemati Betai, who was the wife of a well-known Rangoon merchant, gave all she possessed in her own name and became a total mobilisator. Yet another example of magnificent donation was that of Nizami, who contributed over 27 lakhs of rupees. Bashir Ahmed, who was the Vice-Chairman of the Netaji Fund Committee, also contributed magnificently. He contributed several lakhs of rupees from time to time. Young and old, rich and poor, Indians of all provinces contributed their utmost. The Burmese and the Japanese were greatly impressed by these contributions.

In Burma, too, the Azad Hind Dal was organised and was greatly augmented by fresh recruitment. A special camp was established for the Dal in Rangoon. A special feature of the civilian work was the recruitment of a large number of labourers required for work in connection with the move of the Army to the front. When the troops marched forward to the front line, they followed in their wake so that they might be able to take over the civil administration of any area handed over to them by the military. Selected persons were given special training in wireless and infiltration work. As Assam and Bengal were the first provinces to be tackled, a separate School was established for the special training of selected persons from those provinces under an experienced and capable officer of the I. N. A. Special proclamations were issued by Netaji on behalf of the Provisional Government to the people of the territory into which the I. N. A. was moving forward. The Government of the Liberated Areas had accepted the principle that the Government of a country was responsible

for food, clothing, shelter, education, health and employment of its people, and had made preparations accordingly.

*Undesirable Indians:*

Unfortunately there were certain Indians who were playing into the hands of certain local Japanese authorities in order to gain positions and fortunes. A certain Indian had attached himself to the Japanese and had collected together a number of Indians directly under his command. His little force was called the 'J' Force and was operating on the Arakan front. Reports reached us later that they had caused sufferings and inflictions to the British Indian troops whom they had fought and that they had killed many of the latter. This particular individual, although he wanted to fight along with the Japanese, was against the Azad Hind Fauj. This man was shrewd and intelligent, but was addicted to drinking and was unscrupulous. Netaji tried his best to win him over, but could not succeed. He was, therefore, compelled to tell the Japanese to disband this force and send him back from Burma, as he could not have any faith in the person who liked to ally himself with the Japanese in their invasion of India and yet refused to co-operate with the Indian Independence Movement. There were other Indian groups also who were working independently along with the Japanese. A lot of Indians had been recruited by these parties, put through some sort of training to do infiltration work when they reached India in advance of the invading Army. Netaji got all these men together, explained the situation, and induced everyone of them to leave the Japanese and come over to join the Movement. He also made an agreement with the Japanese that in future they were not to ally themselves with any Indian, or even recruit Indians for any kind of work connected with the campaign. If they wanted any help, they would ask the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and the latter would make all the necessary arrangements for recruitment and training, and give such help as was feasible

in the circumstances; but such recruitment and employment of Indians by the Japanese would be as limited as possible. Their pay and other emoluments would be met by the Provisional Government and not by the Japanese.

### *Indian National Army:*

The Supreme Headquarters of the Azad Hind Fauj was established in suitable bungalows in Rangoon. Advance parties of troops had already arrived and were located in part of the barracks at Mingaladon, which was about sixteen miles from Rangoon and was the main airport of that city. Hutments and houses had been made ready before the Army actually moved in. Some of the contingents, such as the Bahadur Group, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment and the Intelligence Branch, were located in different parts of Rangoon city itself. Different Branches were organized. The Quartermaster-General's Branch was put under the charge of Lt.-Col. (now Colonel) Timaya.

As the supply question was very important and the total number of available articles of supplies were limited, it was decided to have one purchasing agency for the whole Provisional Government, that is, both for the League as well as for the Army, so that there might not be too many competitors in the market. For this reason it was decided that, wherever possible, the Army would purchase all its requirements through the Board of Supplies established under the Minister of Supplies of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind.

### *Ordnance Base Depots:*

A large Ordnance Base Depot was established in Rangoon, where all kinds of equipment required by the Army were collected and stored and then distributed to the different units and formations as required.

The General Staff Branch was also organised and put in charge of Lt.-Col. (now Colonel) Habibur Rahman. It

collected all information and intelligence received from contacts established in the fronts as well as India. It also collected internal information to a certain extent. Plans of operation were prepared in consultation with the Japanese military authorities at the several conferences that were held in this connection. The following training centres were established:—(a) officers' training schools, where selected cadets from the Army as well as from the civil population were put under training in order to provide officers for the Azad Hind Fauj; (b) the Swaraj Young Men's Training Institute, which was at first being run by the Burma Branch of the Indian Independence League, was taken over by the Azad Hind Fauj. Here training in wireless was given to members of the Azad Hind Fauj. At first it was in charge of Maj. Abid Hasan; later on, when he left for the front, it was taken over by another officer. (c) Arrangements were made for special intensive training for the troops of the Bahadur and Intelligence Groups. Netaji decided to abolish the name of the Subhas Brigade. It was henceforth to be known only as the "First Regiment." But the names of the other brigades, viz., Gandhi, Nehru, and Azad Regiments, were to remain. Code numbers were given to all units and formations, to be used in correspondence henceforth, so that the enemy could have as little information as possible.

Notwithstanding every endeavour our forces, when they reached Burma, had no artillery of their own nor even mortars. The machine-guns were only of medium size and deficient of belts and spare parts for them were not available. Our guerilla regiments had no wireless equipment or telephones. Transport—pack or mechanical—for carrying extra arms and ammunition across country or over the hills was not available. Medical supplies were short, particularly surgical appliances. Many of the men had to march barefooted because of shortage of boots in Malaya and, therefore, their feet had suffered.

*Consultation with the Japanese Military Authorities:*

The Japanese Commander-in-Chief, Lt.-Gen. Kawabe, repeated here the same grounds against using up the Azad Hind Fauj in the main battle because of their small number as Marshal Terauchi had put forward in the argument when Netaji saw him right after his arrival in Singapore. Here, too, Netaji refused to agree to this proposal and stuck to his guns. He said that this war was for the liberation of India and, therefore, the Indians must make the utmost sacrifice. The Azad Hind Fauj must be the spearhead of advance and shed blood first.

Netaji also told the Commander-in-Chief that he had impressed upon his soldiers that the I. N. A. was going to India to break the bondage of the Indians to the British yoke and therefore it was up to them to uphold the honour of all Indians—men and women. He had instructed them to shoot any Indian or Japanese, if found looting or raping. The Japanese Commander-in-Chief greatly appreciated this and issued similar orders to his own Army.

*Medical Directorate:*

The Medical Department of the Azad Hind Fauj was put in charge of Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) A. C. Allagappan. A large Base Hospital was established in Mayang about eight miles from Rangoon. The existing barracks were taken over and some new constructions were made. In spite of shortage of equipment and drugs, a good operation theatre and special wards such as those for tuberculosis, dysentery, etc. were provided. Nurses from the Nurses Division of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment took up the care of the sick and wounded with zeal and earnestness, and their services were greatly appreciated. New recruits for nursing were obtained locally and put through their training in this hospital. Staging Sections were formed and kept ready for onward movement along with the troops. There was a general understanding with the Japanese authorities that they would take any patients, sick and

wounded, of the Azad Hind Fauj in their large Advance Base Hospitals, if necessary. They had given the fullest assurance that every facility would be provided. Medical stores were built up and stored in different places in order to minimise damage due to aerial attack by the enemy.

*Suicide Squad:*

In January, 1944, Netaji wanted to select a number of officers, men and women who would give their pledge to carry out certain work in the service of their Motherland. The work was dangerous and required a steady mind, determined courage, and complete fearlessness in facing death. The selected persons would be formed into Suicide Squads. He called for volunteers and there was excellent response. The eagerness of the members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was simply amazing. They were sent for and the position and the dangers involved were fully explained to them. They were told that they would never allow themselves to be captured alive, but that if they were captured, they would be subjected to the utmost torture and finally killed. The members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment said that they would do their utmost to complete the work entrusted to them just in the same way as the men. Netaji could rest assured that they would never be captured alive, and even if they were, they would bear the torture cheerfully and face death bravely. To have the assurance made clearer, they were again asked if they could stand the privations that they would likely have to undergo, and ultimately face death. They unanimously replied that they could stand all sorts of privations. Why did they leave their homes, then, if they could not face these things cheerfully? Netaji was greatly pleased with the answers given.

When campaign in Imphal started, the Provisional Government and the I. N. A. established its Advance Headquarters at Maymyo in order to maintain contact with the Army as well as facilitate the sending forward of the civilian personnel as the Army moved forward.

*Indian Independence League:*

The Headquarters of the Indian Independence League was established in Rangoon, and soon afterwards Netaji amalgamated with it the Headquarters of the Burma Branch of the Indian Independence League and Karim Gani, the ex-Chairman of the Burma Branch, was appointed Adviser to the Indian Independence League Headquarters with respect to problems pertaining to Burma. All the League Branches in Burma were re-organized on the same basis as in Malaya and other countries in East Asia. A special Board of Supplies was formed to make the necessary purchases for the Army, the Azad Hind Dal and the League. The question of supplies was exceedingly important. Although large quantities of supplies were available in Malaya and Siam, the difficulty of transportation was acute. The Japanese could not bring them up from those areas sufficiently quickly. It took weeks and months to get anything from those places, so the local resources had to be husbanded and every effort had to be made to procure the different items of the supplies required by the Army. Habib Sahib was the Chairman of the Board of Supplies with five members, and its Secretary was N. C. Chowdhury. They got the indents for all the requirements needed by the Azad Hind Dal and other Departments and tried to get these articles purchased in the market. After a time it was found not working well, so a Deputy Minister of Supplies—Parmanand Sahib—was appointed, and the Board of Supplies came directly under him. Similarly, the services of officers from the Azad Hind Fauj were procured for helping the Supply Ministry with regard to selection of material from the samples obtained in the market, storage, and issue of the material to the Azad Hind Fauj.

*Education:*

Here, too, the Provisional Government encouraged the Indian Independence League to establish National Schools both for boys as well as girls, as in Malaya. Several



National Schools were established and were under the direction of Bharadwaj Sahib, who was ably assisted by his sister in respect of the girls' schools.

### *Internal Security:*

In order to keep check over the activities of British spies and pro-British elements and counteract their sabotage activities, a Department of Internal Security had to be established. Deb Nath Das was put in charge and was ably assisted by Zaman Sahib in this matter. Very valuable information was collected by this Department and cases of complaint were investigated by it. It rendered really a very valuable service to the movement.

### *Finance:*

In order to collect funds for the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, as mentioned before, a special committee called the "Netaji Fund Committee" was established. As gifts and donations were coming in kind, including business organizations, estates etc., Netaji decided to organise a Revenue Department so to manage these gifts as to ensure a steady stream of income to the Provisional Government. This Revenue Department was put in charge of A. N. Sarkar as Revenue Minister. The routine work of the Finance Department was carried out under the direction of Maj. (now Lt.-Col.) Punnuswami.

### *Women's Branch:*

A Women's Branch was established with Srimati Bela Mukherji as its Secretary. She worked in the most indefatigable manner and her work was very efficient. She did good publicity work among the Indian women regarding the Movement and enlisting of volunteers in the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, and as time went on she proved her capacity for organisation and collection of material for relief and hospital work. She organised the distribution of comforts and sweets to the patients in Mayang hospital

once a week. This was greatly appreciated by the sick and the wounded. She obtained these from voluntary donors without any extra cost to the League.

With the advance of the Azad Hind Fauj and the liberation of parts of India, it was decided by the Provisional Government to appoint a Governor for these liberated territories. In accordance with the unanimous decision of the Cabinet, I was appointed to the post and was immediately sent for by wire from Singapore. On account of transport difficulties there was some delay in my coming and I reached Rangoon on the 17th March, 1944. I was to organize immediately various Departments for the civil administration of the areas and to make the necessary arrangements for the provision of different kinds of necessary supplies. I set to work immediately and began collecting materials for the requirements of the Government for the liberated areas. In this work the late S. C. Ganguli of the Information Department of the Indian Independence League greatly helped me. His assistance was invaluable. Designs for postage stamps were drawn up with the approval of Netaji. Only two denominations were approved, one of two pice and the other of one anna. They showed a rampart of the Lal Killa with the National Tri-colour Flag flying on it. Stationery, printing press, and every other material that is usually required in the administrative offices were collected, packed and stored ready for onward despatch. Personnel were selected for the different departments of the Administration. I drew up a memorandum in consultation with Netaji, showing (a) the administrative divisions of the liberated areas, (b) the policy of the Provisional Government in respect of (i) future Provincial Governments, (ii) Japanese authorities, particularly with regard to the liberated areas. These were finally approved by all concerned and announced at a Press Conference held in Rangoon where I explained the details of the Administration to the representatives of the Press who had come to attend the conference.

When the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj had entered India and had taken up positions on the hills of Arakan and south and east of Imphal, the question of co-ordinating war efforts, particularly relating to supplies, labour, and matters affecting the relationship between the civilian population and the two Armies (Indian and Japanese) arose. The Japanese General Staff in Burma suggested that ways and means be found for the solution of these problems as they arose from time to time both in Burma as well as in the liberated areas. It was agreed that in order to solve these problems smoothly and expeditiously committees should be formed which would include representatives from both sides. The Japanese proposed that the Chairman in both the cases should be elected from amongst their own officers. The matter came up before the Cabinet of the Azad Hind Government and it was discussed thoroughly. Special attention was paid to the carrying out of the campaign for the liberation of India smoothly and successfully. It was decided that while in Burma, we might accept the position that a Japanese officer should be the Chairman and an Indian the Vice-Chairman of such a Committee of Co-ordination; but in India, of every such Committee of Co-ordination, whether Provincial or District, the Chairman must be an Indian. The Japanese were informed accordingly, but they asked for a joint conference consisting of the Japanese General Staff as well as members of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and Commanders of the Azad Hind Fauj. We thought that from our side Netaji would be leading our delegation, but later on it was decided that Lt.-Gen. Kawabe, Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Japanese Forces in Burma and Lt.-Gen. Ishoda, Chief of the Japanese Liaison Office, would only attend the Conference and not take part in the discussion. Netaji appointed me leader of the delegation from our side, while the Chief of the General Staff of the Japanese Army was appointed leader of the delegation from the Japanese side. The conference took place in the

big hall of the Officers' Club in Rangoon. The Chief of the General Staff opened the discussion and spoke about the advantages that would be enjoyed by all concerned if the Co-ordination Committees worked smoothly. He then asked for the appointment of a Japanese Chairman because the Japanese were the senior partners in this campaign and had a very great stake in the war. I replied that I was going to be perfectly frank and whatever I said would be taken in the same spirit as I was going to say it in. I admitted the great help that the Japanese Government were giving to the Indians for the liberation of their country and also further agreed that in Burma the Japanese might be welcomed to the post of Chairmen in the Co-ordination Committee; but on Indian soil, under no circumstances could we agree to a Japanese being the Chairman either in the Provincial or the District Co-ordinating Committee. There he could only be the Vice-Chairman. In our own country it was a matter of principle and honour with us. The people of our country would never agree to the suggestion that the Japanese had put forward. If the Japanese insisted on it, they would rather die to a man than submit to it. After discussion it was decided that it would be postponed for further consideration later on. Lt.-Gen. Ishoda, Chief of the Hikari Kikan, later on told me unofficially that he would agree to my being the Chairman.

*Bal Sena:*

Netaji had made up his mind to continue the struggle as long as possible. It might even take several years before the issue was decided. The American War of Independence, which lasted over seven years, and the Irish Struggle were object-lessons. In every freedom movement there was a constant need of young men and women. As a matter of fact, the success of these movements depended largely on the self-sacrifice of youth. And as casualties occurred they had to be replaced. Prolongation of the War of Independence meant a greater number of casualties

among the youth and these casualties, therefore, required replacements which could not be easily provided unless, apart from anything else, a long-term policy was adopted and preparations were made accordingly. Organization of the Bal Sena—children between the ages of 6 and 16—provided the foundation of these replacements as time went on. Apart from this it inculcated into the minds of the children (a) the urgent necessity of building up their character through the spirit of Service, Faith, and Unity; (b) the love of their motherland; and (c) a sense of discipline. Netaji, therefore, decided to get the children organized. Every town in Burma and Malaya where there were children there was at least one contingent of the Bal Sena. The children took to it as easily as a duckling takes to water. They put on their uniforms and set to their work in right earnest. Their sincerity and determination to do their work well was proved when only after three weeks' preparation they staged a demonstration before a huge gathering consisting of Indians and Burmans in Rangoon. Their smart turn-out, their clear commands, their alertness, their agile and synchronized movements in mass drill and physical training, impressed everyone. It was really a marvel. It could only be achieved when the spirit and soul were behind the body movements. Their smart salutes with the cry of *Jai Hind* put spirit even into the hearts of the meek and the weak. Within a short time they became determined little fellows. Apart from the service which they rendered to the needy and to the community, they did excellent propaganda work. Grown-up men and women could not resist their approach. Their appeal for the motherland went home.

Their determination was well shown even in the hour of defeat. When the British reoccupied Mandalay, they forbade the shouting of *Jai Hind*. They partially succeeded in controlling the grown-up men and women, but they could not suppress the Bal Sena, who disregarded the order so much that it became a farce. It is said that ultimately the

order was rescinded or at least no further action was taken against people saying *Jai Hind*. It was undoubtedly the determination and tenacity of the Bal Sena which did it.

*Rangoon:*

During my drives in Rangoon, I noticed a remarkable thing. There was a great deal of devastation caused by aerial bombing and arson. The business quarter was greatly affected and fully devastated; but in the residential quarters, those belonging to Europeans had remained largely untouched, as also military barracks. Thinanjun, which was a comparatively small township, had grown up immensely, the increase being due to the construction of temporary tinned and thatched huts which accommodated refugees from Rangoon proper, was very much affected. The same was the case with Kamayuth and Kambe, and even Baktow, though very much less in proportion. We got reports from our people in Hanthawadi that it was completely devastated. There were not many buildings standing undamaged.

---

## CHAPTER XI

### BATTLE OF INDEPENDENCE

After the arrival of Netaji in Burma, further consultations were held with the Japanese military authorities in that area who were directly responsible for the operations on the Indo-Burma frontier. Talks were, therefore, held with Lt.-Gen.. Kawabe (now Gen.), Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Armed Forces, and the first reaction which the Japanese general expressed was exactly similar to that expressed by Marshal Terauchi, when Netaji first met him in Singapore, that is, that the Japanese would like to preserve the Azad Hind Fauj as much intact as possible, and therefore would not employ its members in any actual warfare as their number was small and as they wanted us to make an impressive entry into Imphal when that British stronghold was captured by the Japanese. But that could not be well done if the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj took part in actual battle and became decimated on account of enemy action and suffering. To these propositions Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose expressed his strongest objection. Although he admitted that the number of troops immediately available was small, he still insisted that they must fight their way into India and that it was primarily the responsibility of the Azad Hind Fauj of the Provisional Government of Free India to undertake the invasion for the liberation of India and take such help from the Japanese as was needed, and not *vice versa*. When this was clearly explained the Japanese military authorities yielded to Netaji's demand. Further consultations took place in the beginning of January, 1944 and the following joint decisions were arrived at:—

(1) The Azad Hind Fauj and the Japanese Army were to be of equal status. Officers of equal rank were to salute each other simultaneously, while seniority of rank in each Army would be acknowledged by the other.



"We shall meet in Free India.  
Netaji saying farewell to Officers ptoceeding to the Front



"I. N. A. Artillary Pieces."





(2) The two armies would work on a common strategy.

(3) There would be a unified command in the field. Maj.-Gen. Yamamoto being the senior, our Divisional Commander would receive orders in the field from him. But all units and formations must be commanded by the officers of the Azad Hind Fauj and there would be no interference in the internal administration.

(4) Azad Hind Army formations would not be split up into smaller units than a battalion except those of the Bahadur Group (Special Service Group) or of the Intelligence Group.

(5) Officers and men of the Azad Hind Fauj would be under their own military law (The I.N.A. Act) and not under the Japanese military law and police. For the Japanese this was a great departure from their usual practice, for this was the first time that their military police had no control over men of an allied force. The matter had to be referred to Tokyo, whose decision was as Netaji wanted it to be.

(6) Liberated territories were to be handed over to the Azad Hind Fauj.

(7) A definite independent sector would be allotted to the Azad Hind Fauj.

(8) The only flag to fly over the Indian soil would be the National Tricolour.

(9) No indiscriminate bombing of Calcutta was to be carried out.

(10) Any Japanese or Indian soldier found raping any woman was to be shot at once.

It was then decided that the Indian troops should be sent forward immediately to the different sectors of the Indo-Burma frontier. Accordingly, contingents of the Special Service was sent on to the Arakan front.

Before the 1st Division left Rangoon Netaji addressed his troops. He warned his soldiers that where the question of the independence of the country was concerned they were to trust no one, not even our allies the Japanese,

and that the surest guarantee against betrayal was their own armed might. He said, "If ever you find the Japanese trying to establish any type of control over India, turn round and fight them as vigorously as you will fight the British." He again offered to his soldiers the choice to remain behind if they were not willing to fight or to go forward and fight the battle for the Freedom of their Motherland. The choice was theirs. He offered to feed and look after those people who did not want to fight. Not a single soldier fell out. He gave them a week's time for consideration, but not a single application was received.

#### *Arakan Front:*

Intelligence reports suggested that the British were expecting an attack in force on the Chittagong side. The previous year the British had tried unsuccessfully to push back the Japanese line on the Arakan Front. They had made new roads, constructed new aerodromes, established a number of large supply depots between Chittagong and the Mayu river. Buthiadong and Maungdaw were their strong advance bases. The 7th Division was round about Buthiadong, while the 5th Division occupied the Maungdaw area; behind them was the 17th Division, and further north and east was the South African Division occupying the Kaladan area. In co-operation with the Japanese General Staff, it was decided to take advantage of this information and launch an attack in the southernmost areas of the Indo-Burma front. The object was to attract as many Divisions of the enemy as possible towards south, so that when the attack came in the middle and the northern area, the enemy would be taken by surprise and would not be in a position to rush sufficient help in time in order to relieve the encircled troops in those regions. That this was a miscalculation on the part of the Japanese based on faulty Intelligence information about the resources of the British we found later to our cost. However, by the beginning of 1944, the First Division had been more or less completely





We are fighting only for India's liberation and here is a Photograph of our Leader—"Our Beloved Netaji."  
Picture shows—Capt. Ajit Singh, I. N. A., addressing soldiers of British Indian Army, who have walked over and joined the I. N. A. on Arakan Front.

concentrated in Burma and part of its strength went forward to the Arakan front where Lt.-Col. Misra was the senior-most officer in charge of the men. Troops of the Bahadur Group of the Azad Hind Fauj under the command of Shaheed Col. Misra, Sardar-e-Jang and Major Mehar Das, Sardar-e-Jang, attacked the enemy along the Mayu river and pushed them back in conjunction with the Japanese forces. The troops behaved magnificently and attacked fearlessly. There were several instances of individual acts of bravery. They tried to win over as many Indian troops as possible, but unfortunately as the food situation was not favourable they had to release the prisoners. The Japanese co-operated well and ultimately Buthiadong was occupied and the 7th Division completely encircled and annihilated. Lt. Hari Singh won the Sher-e-Hind medal in this sector by displaying extraordinary valour. He slayed seven British soldiers single-handed. Maungdaw was attacked but could not be fully captured. It helped, however, in pinning down a large strength of the British forces in that area.

#### *Kaladan Front:*

Part of the troops of the 1st Brigade moved up to Prome from Rangoon. After marching nearly a hundred miles they formed their base at Kyauktaw. These troops were under the command of Major Raturi, Sardar-e-Jang. On receipt of information that the West African Division was coming down the Kaladan Valley and was trying to cross over from the west bank of the Kaladan river to its east bank, Major Raturi was instructed to stop this. He went forward and attacked the enemy who had already crossed over to the east bank. After a fierce hand-to-hand fight during the night, the enemy fled, but in trying to recross the river, lost several of its boats as they were sunk by our men. With the arrival of the Japanese contingents for our help, our troops occupied Paletwa and, later, Daletine. From the latter place the Indian frontier was forty miles to the west and could be distinctly seen.

Mowdak was the nearest enemy post. Maj. Raturi decided to attack this post as the men were very eager to do so. So after a little rest he made a surprise night attack. The enemy was taken by surprise completely and fled away, leaving behind quantities of stores, including rations, which the men captured and enjoyed. The men were wild with joy when they first set foot on the sacred soil of their Motherland. They threw themselves on the ground and kissed the soil. They shouted with joy and sang their National Anthem. By this time it was the beginning of May, 1944. It was here in Mowdak that Capt. Suraj Mal of the 1st Battalion displayed great courage and initiative in repeatedly repulsing British attacks. He counterattacked and mauled the enemy so heavily that he was not bothered for a long time afterwards.

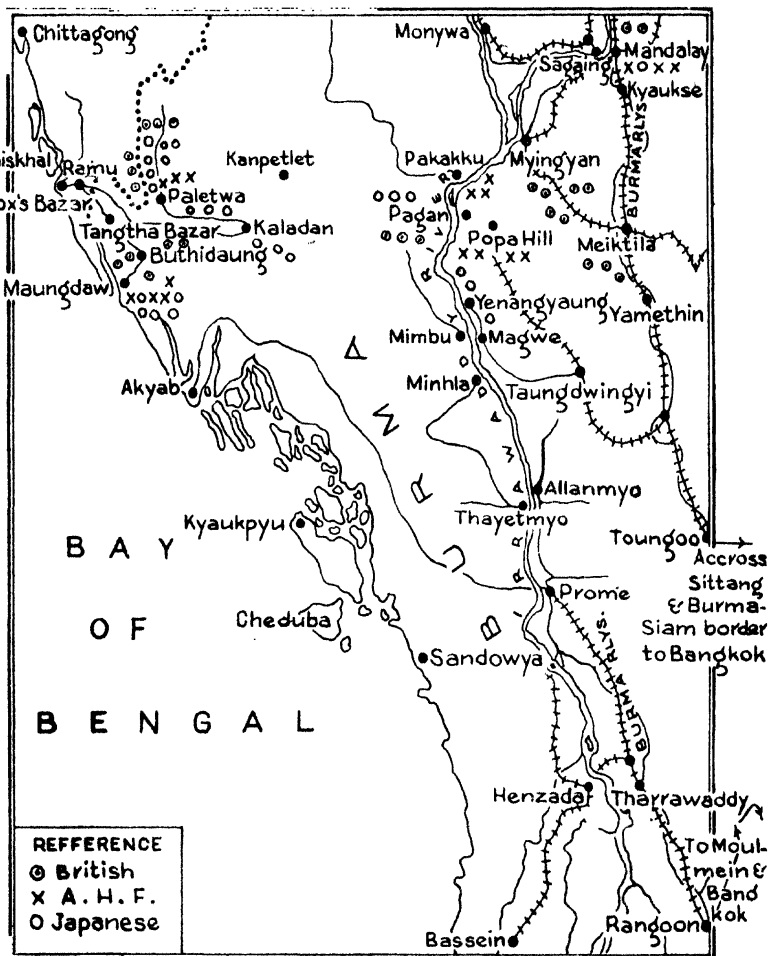
In September, 1944 this force as well as that on the Arakan front retired to Rangoon on Netaji's specific orders, as the Imphal campaign had not succeeded.

#### *Haka and Falam Front:*

The remaining part of the 1st Brigade consisting of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions was ordered to proceed north. In consultation with the Japanese Commander, General Motaguchi, it was decided that this force should proceed to the Haka-Falam area and take over that front from the Japanese troops. It should defend this rear area in order to protect the important line of communication—Kalewa to Tamu in the north and Kalewa and Tiddim in the northwest. It should not allow the enemy to recapture the strongholds of Haka and Falam. The enemy had two brigades to the west of these two places—one located at Lungleh and the other at Aijal, but it had also many outposts and the enemy had raided these two strongholds several times when the Japanese had held them. The Japanese considered it highly important to hold these two focal points in order to protect the main line of communication. All the same a picked regiment like the 1st Brigade ought to have been

## BATTLES OF ARAKAN & CENTRAL BURMA (Popa Hill)

Disposition of the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj,  
Japanese and British on the Arakan & Central  
Burma Fronts.







put in the front line. They could then have shown their dash and valour with much greater vigour in the front lines at this time—February, 1944—rather than being left behind to carry on defence duties on the lines of communication. Naturally Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) Shah Nawaz Khan did not at all relish the idea. Further, for lack of proper transport the men had to carry rations on their backs over difficult hilly country for long distances (sixteen miles every day); this involved hard fatigue work which, in addition to the prevalence of dysentery and malaria, ruined the physique of these magnificent men. But as true soldiers they obeyed orders. Eight outposts had been established between Myitha Haka (Nauchawang), the regimental base in the Ka'aw Valley and the Haka-Falam area. The region was mountainous. Haka was situated at a height of 7,000 feet, while Falam was 6,000 feet above the sea level. The road, the only means of communication, was only a hill track. Although pack transport was available later on, the mischief had already been done and disease completed the picture. A portion of the men were also employed in road-making but it was stopped at once when Maj. (now Lt.-Col.) Mahbub of the Regiment saw it during one of his inspection tours in Fort White area. Moreover, lack of suitable clothing left the men unprotected from the cold on the mountain-tops, and this was also another important cause of the deterioration in the health of our men in this area. The Intelligence report of the Japanese was that the British were preparing to launch a big attack in this area and from Imphal in order to retake Burma. They had massed troops in Imphal and had built an excellent metalled road from Imphal via Pael to More and Tamu.

The important strongholds of Haka and Falam were occupied by our troops and a few other outposts were also established further west and south. In doing so, skirmishes with the enemy occurred; the occupation of Haka in particular had to be carried out after clearing up the enemy stronghold of Chunsong which was ten miles to the west

of the road between Haka and Falam. Magnificent courage, daring and capacity to undertake hard hill-climbing against fortified enemy positions were shown by the officers and men of the Brigade. Whenever they attacked they gained the point. The exploit of Lt. Sehna Singh in the capture of a machinegun post on Klaung Klaung Road with only ten men and then chasing the British troops for miles together, and similar other exploits of his, will ever remain as some of the most daring episodes of the Indian National Army. Major Mahbub Ahmed with a small force attacked the British stronghold of Klaung Klaung and captured it after a bitter hand-to-hand fight and planted the National Tricolour flag there. After our occupation of these posts and the experience that the enemy gained about the fighting qualities of our men, he kept quite a respectable distance between our troops and himself. The enemy was in Burmese territory when the Japanese were holding the line, but he retreated well inside Indian territory when our troops occupied this line. This was maintained till after the failure of the Imphal campaign when our troops received orders to retreat to the east bank of the Chindwin.

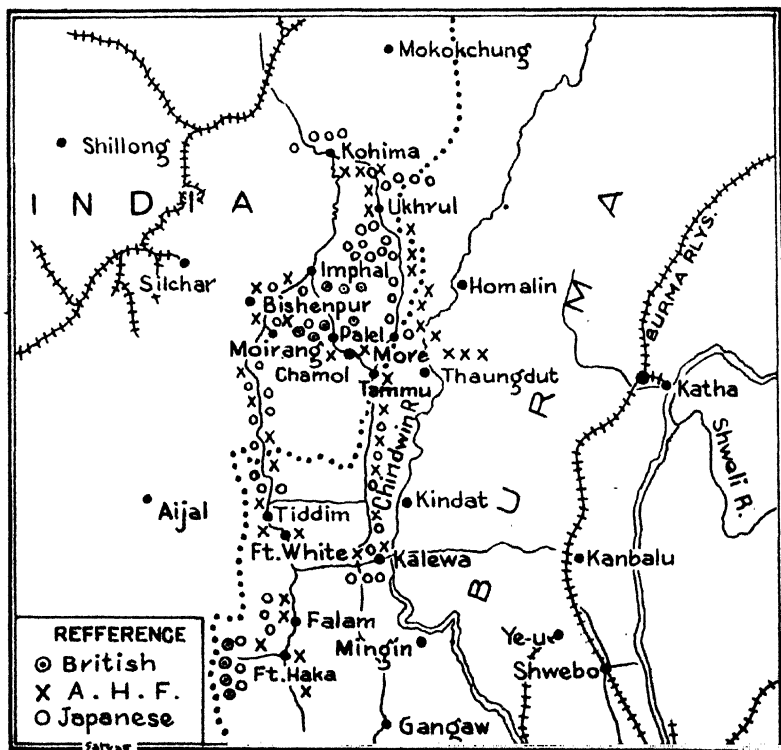
#### *Kohima Front:*

Right in the beginning, in early March 1944, groups of officers and men of the Special Service Group (Bahadur Group) and men of the Azad Hind Dal went up to the Kohima sector, being attached to the crack Japanese Manchurian Division. They were under the Command of Capt. Maggar Singh, Capt. Amar Singh and Dalapati Sinha. They did good work, and as the territories were liberated, these were taken over in the name of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind by the men and officers of the Azad Hind Dal for administration. Minor criminal cases and certain land disputes were settled.

Our combined forces had taken Ukhrul and Kohima, but had been meeting with great opposition. The Japanese realized the mistake of keeping No. 1 Brigade in the Haka

## BATTLES OF IMPHAL & KOHIMA

Disposition of the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj,  
Japanese and British on the Northern Sector  
of the Indo-Burma Frontier.





front for so long a period. Yet Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) Shah Nawaz and his unit were so keen for a real fight. Although the men had greatly deteriorated in physique from repeated attacks of malaria, still they jumped at the idea of being allowed to participate in a real battle. A large portion of their trek to Kohima had to be made on foot. This further delayed their participation in the attack. In the meantime the Japanese had gone on farther, taken Kohima, and made raids towards Dimapur. They had cut the Manipur-Dimapur Road and had completed the encirclement. Strong detachments of the Bahadur and Intelligence Groups of the I.N.A. were with them.

Towards the last week of May the first Regiment arrived in the Kohima area from the Haka-Falam sector, passing through the Kabaw Valley via Tamu, Humine, Ukhrul and finally Kohima. Strong mechanized British forces had pushed back the Japanese from the Kohima-Dimapore Road and then from Kohima itself. Though most of our men had lost health, still they did their best. But deficiency in food was telling upon all, Indians as well as the Japanese. The monsoon had already set in. This made matters still worse. Our men lived on paddy collected from Naga villages.

The British had done extraordinary propaganda work amongst the Chins and the Nagas and had plied them with plenty of food and money. This had greatly impressed them. This unfavourable situation was further accentuated by the behaviour of some of the lower grade Japanese officers, particularly of the Liaison Office. The feelings of the Chins and the Nagas were estranged. We had a Naga Prince who had volunteered to co-operate with us in Naga territory, but his work was greatly thwarted by the behaviour of the Japanese liaison officers and at the end he had to come away from the territory in disgust.

Our forces boiled the paddy with some grass and tried to thrive on the mixture. But one could not do so for more than a week or ten days and that in the thick of fight

with a well-equipped and strong enemy. There were hardly any medicines to help them tide over their sickness. The only thing that sustained was *Jai Hind* and their indomitable will. But this could not last for ever. The enemy was attacking strongly. He was deploying his troops and supporting them strongly with mechanized forces, including air support, for the relief of Imphal which had been besieged by us and the Japanese and had been completely cut off from their bases in Assam except by air. Our forces and those of the Japanese first fell back from Kohima upon Ukhrul. The Kohima-Imphal Road was then open to the enemy for his use. But soon afterwards further strong enemy forces were deployed from Kohima towards Ukhrul and the monsoon intensified. The result was that our forces had to fall back upon Tamu, which was the only place where they could get rations of some kind. This was towards the end of June. The whole of this retreat from Kohima to Tamu was one of the grueliest tests which our men (also the Japanese) had to pass through. Hundreds of men just lay down on the roadside and died. It was a case of each for himself. Yet whoever could, helped his comrades. A large percentage was suffering from disease and everyone from privation.

The column from Kohima arrived at Tamu and it was expected at first that they would join the main force of the 1st Division, but in the meantime the situation had worsened and the whole of the 1st Division had received orders from Netaji to withdraw from their position to the eastern bank of the Chindwin. Our forces from Kohima under Col. Shah Nawaz Khan had to march to Ahlow, cross the Ye river and then go by boat along the Chindwin to Kalewa. This, too, was a very trying phase. The Japanese service systems had broken down and several of their junior officers in their hour of defeat had lost the spirit of co-operation, faith and fellow-feeling towards the soldiers of the I.N.A. Unfortunate misunderstandings occurred and there were even minor fights; but in the end these fizzled out. The troops

of the I.N.A. always maintained their dignity even under the worst conditions and never allowed these Japanese underlings to boss over them at any time. This spirit was probably new to these young officers. They had not evidently met it anywhere else, so they could not understand the Indians' viewpoint. This was largely responsible for the turning of the tide against the Japanese military authorities in many countries in South-east Asia, such as Burma, Siam, Borneo etc.

### *Imphal Front:*

The strategy succeeded to the extent that the enemy was pushed back from all those areas. Troops of the I.N.A. crossed the Indo-Burma frontier and planted the National Tricolour flag for the first time on the liberated Indian soil on the 4th of February, 1944. There was tremendous enthusiasm and rejoicing and the men, before reaching the frontier, raced and vied with one another to be the first to set foot on free Indian soil. The enemy retreated largely to Manipur through the Tiddim-Manipur Road.

As the first phase of the liberation campaign on the Arakan and the Kaladan fronts was fully developed and the second phase on the Kohima front was in progress, the machinery for the third phase of the campaign, the attack on the Imphal front, was set in motion. The British had not realized the real intention of ourselves and the Japanese until Moray and Tamu were attacked in force from the east and Bishenpur, about ten miles west of Imphal, was occupied.

In the meantime the 1st Division under Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) M. Z. Kiani was sent north towards the Imphal front. Part of the 1st Brigade which was kept in reserve was diverted towards the Haka front in order to hold the lines of communication. This was greatly disliked by the regiment. A gallant soldier like Lt.-Col. Shah Nawaz Khan was greatly disappointed as he was very eager to get to grips with the British forces. But the Japanese General Staff



persuaded Netaji to agree to this arrangement as they pressed that they wanted a strong and reliable force to protect the lines of communication and safeguard the rear as they were withdrawing their troops and sending them to the front lines. It was a mistake not to use this force as one of the main striking forces. Its men later on suffered a great deal from fatigue fever. The 2nd Gandhi Regiment under the command of Lt.-Col. (now Col.) Inayat Kiani proceeded by rail to Mandalay. A tremendous send-off, which Netaji himself attended, was given to them at the railway station. They left in passenger trains as well as goods trucks most of which contained coal. Plain bamboo mats were stretched over the coal, and in some cases even this was not available. But the men were all boiling with enthusiasm and itching for a fight with the enemy. Everyone was keen to be the first to set his foot on the liberated soil of his motherland.

Train after train left Rangoon in quick succession. It took them a few days to reach Mandalay. From there some went by train up to Kinu and then to Ye on foot, while others crossed the river at Sagaing and went in motor lorries and reached Ye. From there the troops went to Kalewa largely by lorries crossing the Chindwin river within four miles of that place. Part of our forces (Bahadur Group), after passing through Tiddim and Morang, went as far as Bishenpur. Col. S. A. Malik was in charge of these forces. While in Bishenpur he got in contact with the people of Manipur and received enthusiastic support from them. In this area, quite a number of British Indian forces surrendered to us, but on account of the difficult situation in respect of rations, they were not taken as prisoners and were allowed to go back to the British Indian Army. Very valuable work was done in this area by Col. Malik for which Netaji awarded him the honour of Sardar-e-Jang. A camp was established at this place where a large number of men—about 200—who had a relapse of malaria had to be left behind.

The 2nd Brigade went forward and reached Tamu which lies on the ancient Indo-Burma trade route. The Japanese had already pushed back the British troops who had retired into India. The 1st Division left a small detachment of its Headquarters at Moray which was just within the Indian border. The Azad Hind Fauj force pushed forward and the Divisional Headquarters was established at Chamol, while the Gandhi Regimental Headquarters was established at Mitha Khanjoul, further 18 miles west-north-west of that place and west of the main Tamu-Manipur road. The British had well prepared this road for their main advance into Burma and had therefore concentrated strong forces in its vicinity. Their advance headquarters was in Palel which possessed an aerodrome also. Their troops had strong artillery and air support. The Gandhi Brigade had to bear the brunt of their attacks in several instances. The three battalions of the Regiment spread out on the hills overlooking the plains of Manipur and faced the advance British stronghold at Palel in Manipur area 16 miles south-east of Imphal. The troops had moved into their position with only ten days' rations with them. There was no transport attached to them, nor were there any means of communication—telephone or wireless—between the battalion and the Regimental Headquarters or the Regimental and the Divisional Headquarters. The Japanese had promised to supply telephones, or at least wireless sets, but these did not materialize until very late. From the Regimental Headquarters to the Divisional Headquarters, whenever a message had to be sent, the despatch runner had to cover a distance of 18 miles each way through enemy ambushes and snipers.

The Gandhi Regiment was on the left flank of the Japanese army on the Imphal front. It was given this area in order to protect this flank and carry out raids deep behind the enemy lines. Strict instructions had been given to the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj not to kill or wound any of the Indian troops on the British side unless they attacked

us. They were to make every effort to win them over by persuasion. The fighting commenced. Several skirmishes and raids took place. In the earlier part of the fight a plan was made to attack the aerodrome in Palel. This force covered about 40 miles of steep mountainous country and successfully infiltrated behind the enemy front line and attacked the aerodrome in Palel. The attacking force was under the command of Maj. (now Lt.-Col.) Pritam Singh, Sardar-e-Jang. During this operation a strong British-Indian picket was attacked by a small body of our troops under the command of Captain Sadhu Singh at night. After some time the troops of the picket called out, "*Hamko kahe marte ho? Mat maro. Ham aplogke bhai hain. Aplog keya chahte ho?*" (Why are you killing us? Don't kill. We are your brothers. What do you want?) and stopped fighting. On this our troops ceased attacking. Capt. Sadhu Singh, accompanied by Lieutenants Lal Singh and Kapur Singh went into the picket. The V.C.O. in command of the picket enquired of our officers as to what they wanted of them. Lal Singh, who was in front said, "*Mai to seref in donon engrajon ka khun pina chahta hu. Apse hamari koi larhai nehi hai.*" (I want to drink the blood only of those two English fellows. We have no quarrel with you.) Lal Singh was armed only with a spear and he charged at the two English officers who were hiding behind a stone wall in the picket. Lt. Lal Singh killed both these officers. The men in the picket then opened fire and killed Lt. Lal Singh. Lt. Kapur Singh and Capt. Sadhu Singh then attacked and killed some of the V.C.O's and men but in the fighting Lt. Kapur Singh was also killed. Capt. Sadhu Singh, although severely wounded, managed to jump over the strongly built wall and rejoined his men. Major Pritam, realizing that his officers and men had been treacherously misled, attacked the picket. But partly due to its being heavily fortified and surrounded with dense barbed wire and partly due to the breaking of daylight he could not succeed in capturing it and therefore withdrew. But another

party detailed by Major Pritam Singh to attack the aerodrome itself had reached its objective and captured the aerodrome. But as they did not find any trace of the Japanese force which was supposed to arrive there according to plan and as the party was not strong enough to hold the aerodrome defences by itself, the party, after destroying the aeroplanes, rejoined the other party of the striking force.

In order to give support to Major Pritam Singh Sardare-Jang, the Regimental Commander had gone out with a supporting column and had occupied a dominating ridge. As day broke, enemy artillery and aeroplanes bombarded our positions and the Gandhi Brigade suffered heavy casualties. In the meantime, while Major Pritam Singh realized that he was being surrounded by the enemy, he decided to get back to the Regimental Headquarters. During the day he rested and pushed forward again at night, but he, too, was surprised at the non-arrival of the Japanese support. On the way he found that he and his men—who now numbered very much less than even a company—were surrounded by a British battalion. As they had all determined not to surrender, there was only one way open for them and that was to fight through the cordon that the enemy had spread around them. His men were hungry and tired, but they fought bravely and with determination and cut through the enemy cordon, and ultimately reached their starting point, but he had to pay very heavily for this brave and daring operation. Maj. Pritam Singh returned to the Regimental Headquarters after being without food for three days. It was found later that communications from the Japanese authorities had been wrongly interpreted by the Japanese interpreter, and that Japanese troops were only to move forward on the day following that on which Maj. Pritam Singh was instructed to proceed towards the rendezvous. Later on it was found that even that order had been cancelled and therefore the Japanese did not move forward at all. During these operations

Major Akbar Ali Shah as a doctor showed the greatest devotion to his patients and ingenuity in meeting the demands made on him. He was severely handicapped because of shortage of medicine and surgical instruments. On one occasion he had to use a razor for amputating a limb as he did not have a strong scalpel.

After this the enemy began to be active. They attacked the area immediately close to the west of the Regimental Headquarters. The British this time employed white troops—the Seaforth Highlanders. They made repeated assaults on the position which was guarding the Regimental Headquarters but every time they were repulsed. Our troops then counterattacked and inflicted severe casualties on the enemy in his defensive positions. In these operations our troops were largely composed of Tamils recruited from Malaya. They acquitted themselves very creditably Malaya. They acquitted themselves very creditably and gave the lie to the British propaganda about martial and non-martial races.

The rains broke out much earlier than usual, as a result of which the question of supplies of rations and ammunition became very difficult. Constant fatigue and lack of proper food and medicine seriously impaired the health of the troops. Yet till now they had always gained their objective whenever they had attacked, and had not yielded an inch of territory when attacked by the enemy in spite of the fact that he was superior in number and armaments and was almost always supported by artillery and air force. The bravery and heroism shown by Capt. Rao, Lt. Mansukh Lal and Lt. Ajaib Singh in successfully defending the Regimental Headquarters and beating back against heavy odds the determined attacks of the enemy, will ever remain glorious in the history of the Azad Hind Fauj. Lt. Mansukh Lal had already thirteen bullet wounds on his body when he made the brilliant final charge along with his men to capture the hill position on which depended the safety of the Regimental Headquarters. In this battle 600 men of





Captured British Tommies working under supervision of I. N. A. Soldiers.



I. N. A. Soldiers working in co-operation with Brengun Carriers.

the Azad Hind Fauj successfully battled against nearly 3000 soldiers of the British who had superior arms and equipment.

As the ration question became acute Col. I. J. Kiani held consultations with the headmen of the people round about his area regarding the supply of food to his troops. He explained to them that the alternative for him was to withdraw. They pleaded with him not to do so and promised to help as best they could. They had appreciated his administration of the Liberated Area which was nearly 200 square miles in extent. They had willingly accepted his decisions on the land disputes which they had submitted to him. The Nagas and the Cacharis were largely in our favour—particularly the former. They had greatly resented the imprisonment of their Rani Guidalo by the British. Neither did they like the Japanese on account of the behaviour of the Japanese liaison officers. They gave our men every possible help, but it was not practicable for them to feed our troops for a long time. The enemy had also discovered our difficult position. Thousands of leaflets were scattered over our lines urging our men to desert and solemn promises were given that they would not be put to any harm if they did so; they would be given three months' leave to go to their respective homes where their wives and children were anxiously waiting for them; did they not want to see them? Some leaflets were even addressed personally—one was addressed to Col. I. J. Kiani, the Regimental Commander.

The enemy launched a vigorous attack on the Brigade Headquarters early in the month of July, 1944. The regimental strength had dwindled down to about only a thousand strong. The attack was particularly strong as the enemy had received reinforcements and had reorganized its local forces. For a time the situation seemed to be very grave. But Major Abid Hassan, who was a Staff Officer in the Divisional Headquarters and had replaced Major Garewal who had deserted, saved the situation. He first defended his position successfully and then broke



through the enemy encirclement. Later the whole Regiment counter-attacked and repulsed the enemy. On account of their displaying acts of bravery, daring and excellent initiative in these operations, Maj. Hassan, Lt. Rama Rao and Capt. Taj Mohammad received from Netaji the coveted decoration of Sardar-e-Jang.

### *The 3rd (Azad) Brigade:*

This brigade under the command of its able and determined leader Col. Gulzara Singh arrived in Rangoon from Malaya in April, 1944, but on account of transport difficulties could arrive on the scene battle rather late. However, by taking forced marches between Kodama and Tamu, they arrived in the latter place towards the end of May, 1944. Our Divisional Commander allotted to them the sector to the right of the Japanese forces so that the Brigade could protect the right flank of our combined forces and attack Palel from the east. The Headquarters of this Brigade were established at Mintha, which is about 10 miles north of Moray.

The Brigade occupied the strategic positions in their sector, but before they could launch large-scale operations, the rains set in and made the position very difficult.

### *Government Headquarters Moved:*

In the meanwhile it was decided to move forward the machinery and material of the Government of the Liberated Areas to Maymyo. With the onward progress of the Azad Hind Fauj it was also decided to establish Advance Headquarters of the Provisional Government, the Azad Hind Fauj and the Indian Independence League in Maymyo. Accordingly these were moved forward and established there in April, 1944. Some of the formations went by rail while others went by car and lorry. Netaji himself also went up to Maymyo by car. I followed him in another car along with three or four other cars taking other officers and Japanese liaison officers. We started in the evening

and travelled the whole night and reached Ziawadi early in the morning. We stayed there the day and started again in the evening and reached Meiktila the next morning. We started again next evening and reached Mandalay early next morning. During this period, enemy air activity was comparatively less, but as Netaji was travelling, it was decided as a matter of precaution to do most of the journey by night.

On our arrival at Mandalay again we were greatly struck by the immense damage that had been done to the business quarters and residential quarters occupied by Indians and other Asiatics. The damage was first done by the Japanese who attacked the railway centre and certain military establishments and a certain proportion of the business quarters, but the greatest damage was done by the Chinese and the British bombers. The Chinese burnt as many buildings as they could before they evacuated Mandalay in the early part of 1942. Here also a large part of the residential quarters of the Europeans as well as military barracks were found intact. It is estimated now that only 1800 houses were left intact out of a total of 38,000.

A contingent of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was also sent by lorry. On arrival at Maymyo it was found that a large part of the advance parties of the Azad Hind Dal, who had been sent up from Rangoon over six weeks previously to follow in the wake of the liberating army in order to take over civil administration of the liberated areas, were still at the place. Only a part had proceeded to the front line areas under the command of D. M. Khan and S. Chatterji. The Azad Hind Dal at Maymyo was located in the reserve forests where they had built up temporary huts for their accommodation. They were well camouflaged and were not visible from above. In order to provide our troops with "iron" rations as a standby in case their rations failed to reach them for a time, or when they were to undertake long marches, the local Independence League had taken up the responsibility for preparing them.

They were *Sakkarparas* made of *atta* and sugar which were fried in cooking oil. The *atta* was supplied by the Indians free as donation, while sugar and oil were provided by the Japanese authorities. These were tasted and found to be very defective. They were found to be so hard that they could not be cracked by normal human teeth. Unfortunately large quantities had already been prepared. They could only be used after being soaked for some time in hot water. The defects in the composition were corrected and the proper types of *Sakkarparas* were prepared, but unfortunately the baking difficulties were still there. The *Sakkarparas* were put in gunny sacks as no other suitable arrangements could be made for their packing. As long as the sacks were under cover the material remained quite good, but when they were exposed to the rains these iron rations deteriorated rapidly as moulds and fungus got into them very easily.

Men of the Azad Hind Dal were in high spirits and were extremely eager to go forward. It was discovered that there was a batch of 13 Indians directly engaged by the Japanese to do wireless work. The matter was taken up immediately and the irregularity was rectified. The men were enlisted in the Azad Hind Dal and the Japanese authorities were informed that if in future they wanted any men, they should apply to us. Later on the Japanese sent up a long list of demands for men for various technical purposes, such as, fitters, mechanics, drivers, brickmakers, boatmen, etc. The necessary men, as were available, were selected and their services were lent to the Japanese. They were sent in charge of an officer who would be responsible for looking after these men. He would report to us for any help they might require.

No news had been received from the frontline areas for nearly a fortnight. This was worrying Netaji very much. Enquiries had been made of the Japanese Liaison Office (Hikari Kikan) but they could not give any definite information, but promised to get information as soon

as possible. They said that one of their senior officers had already proceeded to the front line and they were expecting information very soon.

When the Liaison Office failed to get the required information from the front line, Netaji decided to depute three senior officers to proceed to that area immediately. Accordingly, Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) S. C. Allagappan, Director of Medical Service, Ananda Mohan Sahay, Secretary to the Provisional Government of Free India, and myself were sent out. I took with me six lakhs of rupees for payment to the troops and for making any necessary arrangements for supplies, etc., on the way. We started on the 16th May in a car and a lorry and came down to Mandalay. Here we met the representative of the First Brigade who had come to ask for money for payment to the troops. I gave him all that he wanted. In Mandalay Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) S. C. Allagappan joined us in his car, and took a lorry with him carrying rations required for us on the way and also took with him Chidambaram, the Chairman of the Indian Independence League at Monewa. These two gentlemen were of very great help to us later on. We crossed the Irawaddy at Sagaing. According to arrangement we left our lorries on the east bank at Sagaing. We unloaded the material, crossed the ferry and tried to pick up another lorry which the Japanese had promised to provide at Sagaing. Evidently there was some confusion regarding the instructions that had been sent for this purpose from the Japanese authorities as it was not possible to get that lorry. We, therefore, managed with the one lorry we had and moved north towards Yeu. Enemy activity over Yeu was fairly frequent. The cars went on speedily, but the lorry could not keep pace with them. It fell behind and was lost sight of for some time. In the dark the turning near Kinu towards the left to Yeu was missed and we proceeded a long way northwards. At last in the morning the mistake was discovered and we retraced our route southwards. As it was day-light we had to stop in many places

in order to avoid enemy planes which were flying quite low over the area. We managed to dodge these and reached the corner where we should have turned left in the night. We found the lorry sheltering underneath a huge tree which was near a Buddhist Poongyi Kchaung (Monastery). Soon after our arrival several enemy planes came in and were flying low. They bombed and machinegunned round about the area. We took shelter in a trench which had been dug under the tree. During the day we had to remain there. Towards the evening we reached Yeu which was the Headquarter of the No. 2 Motor Transport Co. and met Capt. (now Lt.-Col.) Harnam Singh. We stayed the night at Yeu and also the following day.

As our cars were not fit to go over the difficult and bad roads in front, arrangements had been made to take us to the front line in lorries. Accordingly we took two trucks with which Capt. Harnam Singh provided us along with materials for repairing minor breakdowns on the way. We first visited a group of Azad Hind Dal people at a place about sixteen miles northwards of Yeu. They were quite enthusiastic and in good spirits except for the fact that one of their comrades, late Bal Sahib, had been bitten by a poisonous snake and had died.

Late in the evening on the 18th May we started from Yeu. We proceeded on the journey the whole night and passed on our way Kadoma, which was an important Japanese transport and supply depot and halted next morning in a wood, which consisted largely of teak-wood trees. Here we met a group of eight Gurkhas who were leading pack animals for the Japanese. They were dissatisfied with the work and wanted to come back to the Azad Hind Fauj. Their names, addresses, and references were taken down for necessary action. Towards the evening we started again and reached Asfaujui which was a more wooded place and where a large Japanese hospital was located. We halted here the whole day and started again towards evening. On our way we had to cross a

bridge which had been damaged by enemy action. Towards early morning we reached a jungle area along the banks of the Chindwin. We drove down the slope from the road into the jungle and parked our cars in a well-sheltered place. Towards evening, while we were resting, we saw a remarkable sight. We heard the distant noise of planes coming towards the area, at the same time we heard the noise of motor lorries, and in a few seconds we saw three Japanese lorries racing with their headlights full on the embanked road along the Chindwin. Almost immediately came two enemy planes flying low over the river. It seemed as if both were racing, but what surprised us most was that nothing happened. The planes went ahead and not a single shot was fired nor a bomb dropped. The Japanese lorries after a time disappeared from view. We stayed there the whole day and towards evening went near the ferry to cross the Chindwin River. There was slight rain in the evening. As we made for the river we had to go up the hill. The lorries were not powerful enough to pull full weight, so we all got down and unloaded a part of the equipment and material that was with us. After a good deal of struggle the lorry got over the slope and began to descend on the other side of the hill. The road was very slippery because of the rain. One of the lorries, after going over the top of the hill, as it began to go down the slope on the other side, began to skid. A part of the road on the side of the river had subsided. The lorry, after skidding some distance, came over this part and one of its wheels went down the hillside and it seemed that the whole lorry was going to fall into the river, but the driver with great presence of mind applied the brakes fully, and the lorry came to a standstill. This was just a miraculous escape. We then took the shovels that we had with us, and rebuilt the part of the road in front of the sunken wheel of the lorry in order to bring the wheel back on the firmer part of the road. The other lorry also helped in pulling it away from the precarious position it was in.

After that we proceeded further towards the ferry. Not very far from the ferry we came across the ruins of the recently burnt-down village, Kiki. It was evident the village had been recently bombed and burnt. It was totally devastated. We saw a swollen and half-burnt dead body dangling from the floor of a house. The sight was gruesome, but it was only one of the many sights we had seen in Burma where so many villages and cities had been burnt down.

While waiting at the rendezvous we found a propaganda leaflet in Burmese and English dropped by the British planes. It had a picture of the great Bandula of ancient Burmese history. The propaganda leaflet was excellent in its wording. We crossed the Chindwin towards evening and our trucks were carried across the river on flat boats pulled by small launches. After our arrival on the western bank of the Chindwin, we enquired about our camping place and found that Kalewa, by which the crossing of the river was known, was actually four miles away from there. We went to the place, and the Japanese Liaison Officer, who was with us, found that Col. Kagawa of the Japanese Liaison Office was in Kalewa and was returning to Maymyo that evening. We saw him at his place but could get no information from him nor any suggestion. He was in too much of a hurry to get back. It was indeed a disappointing meeting. On our way from Yeu to Kalewa we had found that the roads had been freshly prepared by the Japanese, that new bridges, almost all made of wood, had been set up by them and that during the dry weather they were all motorable. At Kalewa we experienced rainfall for the first time in this area and within a short time the roads became very slippery. This was about the third week of May, 1944. As a matter of fact, one of the lorries skidded and was halfway down the slope along the embanked road.

We were informed that enemy planes flew day and night all along this area and that they might come over us at any time. Ordinarily, if a lorry broke down on the road, it was

a matter of great luck if this was not destroyed by an enemy plane which was almost always hovering over the place during day. However, luck was still with us and after strenuous efforts, with the help of the men of the Azad Hind Dal whom we discovered staying in Kalewa, we managed to put the lorry on the road and take it to a sheltered place. For the night we slept in the lorries. We woke up before dawn and took the lorries to a much better protected place in the jungle on the hillside. Here we found mosquitoes in abundance and were badly bitten. The camp in Kalewa was scattered. There were low hills covered with bamboo and shrubs in which the camps of the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj and the Azad Hind Dal were located. In front of the hills, there was a large flat piece of ground beyond which there was the Kalewa river, in which at the time when we arrived, the water was barely three feet deep. Here we also heard the news that the First Brigade had also received orders to leave the Haka area and proceed to the Kohima front.

After making all the arrangements, we informed the officer-in-charge of the Japanese Liaison Office that henceforth S. Chatterji was appointed Camp Commandant, and that in future all matters relating to the camp should be referred to him; so also arrangements might be made for the delivery of the necessary supplies meant for the camp.

We discovered next morning that in Kalewa S. Chatterji and his party and also Majors R. N. Ghosh and Chakrabarty with the men and equipment of their respective Health Units were staying in improvised huts of brushwood and bamboo sticks, and so also were 200 men of the Azad Hind Fauj who had fallen sick and were left behind by the 2nd Gandhi Regiment on their way to Tamu. All complained of lack of facilities for treatment of the sick, shortage of food and lack of accommodation. They said that they had asked from the local Japanese authorities and the Japanese Liaison Office for facilities for constructing huts but none was forthcoming. With the greatest difficulty S. Chatterji



had started constructing huts, but it came to a standstill due to lack of funds and other facilities. Yet the materials were available in the villages as well as in the jungle near by. Here was a case where everything was available but needed co-ordination, so I got together all the officers and told them that everything would be put right if they were prepared to work in co-operation with each other. I appointed S. Chatterji Camp Commandant of the area and Co-ordinating Officer. All requirements of the different Units were to be sent to him and he was to make necessary arrangements for their provision. The internal administration of the Units was to be carried on as usual by the respective Unit Commanders. I asked Maj. Ghosh to open his Health Unit which was meant for the Liberated Areas, and immediately start taking in any patients who might want hospital treatment. I placed some money at the disposal of S. Chatterji to enable him to make the necessary purchases of rations as well as materials required for constructing huts. The work pertaining to construction of huts was re-started immediately and proceeded apace. In the procurement of supplies and materials for constructing huts, the services of Chidambaram and Ajodhya Singh were of very great value, as they took parties from the Azad Hind Dal to the nearby villages and collected as much food and material as possible and made arrangements for the future. It was arranged that as soon as Ajodhya Singh returned to Mandalay he would make the necessary purchases from Monewa and other places and bring them up in boats to Kalewa for establishing there a big supply depot as well as forwarding them up the line. It was here that we learnt from the Japanese Liaison Office that the 3rd Azad Regiment under the command of Col. Gulzara Singh was coming up and was almost near the other side of the Chindwin. We stayed at Kalewa for two days and on the third night we started on the onward journey. On account of rain we had not proceeded very far when we had to experience the awful condition of the road which had been cut up badly

and converted into slush almost 18" to 20" deep. Our lorries got stuck and we had to get down and have them extricated with the greatest difficulty. There was a further accident on the way. The road lay across the middle of a river on which planks had been laid in order that the wheels of the lorries might not get stuck in the sandy bed of the river. Unfortunately, during the night the driver could not see that some of these planks had broken down. The wheels of one of our lorries sank through a plank which had broken and got stuck in the sand-bed and got damaged. Here, again, it was with the greatest difficulty that it was again pulled out with the help of some other Japanese lorries which were passing. After proceeding some distance, we had to come to a standstill again as the lights of the lorries failed, and could not be put right, and the mechanic accompanying us was very apologetic for having no more electric bulbs with him.

When it was early dawn, we decided to leave the place immediately as it was very much exposed, but it was also risky to dash forward during the day to the next camping ground at Indangi which was at a distance of 13 miles from where we were, but we preferred to take this risk to standing on the roadside with inadequate cover. Luck was with us, and without encountering any enemy air activity we safely reached Indangi which was largely a bamboo jungle and where the local Japanese Headquarters were located. Unfortunately, the bamboo trees had no leaves, so everything was visible to low-flying aircraft. Our mechanic told us that it would not be safe to take the lorries any further as they were old and were not powerful enough to go through the mud and slush. We, therefore, saw the local Japanese authorities and explained the situation to them. They were very courteous and sympathetic, and immediately placed a good lorry and a Japanese driver at our disposal.

After we left Indangi we proceeded up the Kabaw valley. At daybreak we stopped in Yazagyo, a large wooded

place on the left side of the valley where the Japanese had a big encampment well concealed by trees. We proceeded farther north in the evening and again stopped early next morning at another halting place. At this place we found a clean rivulet and decided to go for a bath. As we proceeded to the rivulet we had the first sight of the hills of Manipur. It gave us a great thrill and a sense of joy and happiness to have a sight of the Motherland after such a long period. As I was going for the bank of the stream, I tried to reach a clean place and walked across an area where some barbed wire was lying on the ground. I did not realize the danger at the moment. After I had gone a few steps I saw a stone on which was written 'Minefield'. It was evidently an anti-tank minefield, so I quickly retraced my steps and had a very narrow and miraculous escape.

The next evening we started again and halted at another camping ground at early dawn. The following evening we started for Moray. We passed Tamu in the early dawn. This place is situated on the historic trade route between India and Burma which had been allowed to fall into disuse by the British. In the ancient days many a trade caravan and immigrant from India went along this route, but now on account of the exigencies of War a network of macadamized roads had been built up by the British, and abandoned on their retreat from the Indo-Burma frontier. We reached Moray, partly within the border of India and partly outside it, at day-break on the 27th May. We met here D. M. Khan and his party of the Azad Hind Dal who had arrived here nearly six weeks ago to move forward with the army when required to do so, but as the situation had come to a standstill, they had been obliged to stay where they were. In course of the day we visited two other camps of the Azad Hind Dal which were a little distance away. In visiting the camps we crossed the actual border line between India and Burma and came near the post where the boundaries of Burma and Assam were shown. It was indeed a matter of tremendous joy to set foot again on the

soil of the Motherland. It thrilled us and I raised my hands in thankfulness to God for His grace.

There were other details of the Azad Hind Fauj, for example, Re-inforcement Group, Engineering Company, some details of the Headquarters of the 1st Division etc. A hospital had also been opened up and was acting under late Maj. Akbar Ali Shah who so nobly sacrificed his life in the service of his Motherland. He contracted typhus fever but went on serving the patients of his unit and refused to leave them. Later on during our retreat we found that he had died of the disease at Monewa. At Moray we found the same complaints about lack of supplies etc. Here, too, co-ordination was lacking. We made here the same arrangements as in Kalewa and I appointed D. M. Khan the Camp Commandant of the whole area and made him responsible for co-ordinating all the work that was necessary. D. M. Khan was very kind and hospitable to us, and after a long time we had the privilege of tasting *parattas* of real Indian wheat fried in ghee. These materials he had been able to salvage from the stores of provisions left by the British during their retreat. He also gave us the pleasure of having fresh fish from the river. It was indeed a very great surprise. We asked him how he had managed to do this, and he replied that he had a Gurkha orderly who could catch fish in the river with his bare hands. It was indeed an extraordinarily clever effort. When we asked how he managed to do this when the river got muddy, he said that the Gurkha had told him that in clear water the fish could see him, but that in muddy water he could see the movements of the fish but the fish could not see him. He proved it by getting more fish when the river water became muddy after a shower.

I handed over to D. M. Khan sufficient money for the purpose. As I had heard that Col. Gulzara Singh was coming up the line with his troops, I handed over to D. M. Khan money, sufficient to cover three months' expenses to be

handed to Col. Gulzara Singh to make payment to his troops for their pocket allowance.

At Moray the 2nd Regimental Hospital was established as there was no other suitable place further west. Because of the constant enemy air activity the whole hospital was below the ground level. The beds (largely stretchers) of the patients were all in trenches, covered over with tarpaulins. The hospital was located in a teakwood forest, but the cover was not very effective. During our stay in Moray, the enemy bombed and machinegunned the place. Luckily there were very few casualties. We also received reports that some of the petty Japanese liaison officers had not been behaving properly and had attempted to dominate some of our men. In every instance our men had stood up and had returned the compliment. On one occasion one of the officers actually drew his sword to assault one of our junior officers, who immediately drew his revolver and pointed it at the Japanese officer. The latter immediately saw the grim reality and put back his sword. These were very unfortunate incidents and did not make for better relationship. We noted, however, all that was reported to us in this connection.

From our visits to the different places at Moray, we saw that the macadamized roads had been constructed by the British. Large engineering store depots had been established, and our men reported that when they arrived in Moray over six weeks ago, they found large quantities of foodstuffs stored in the trenches. All this indicated that the British had been preparing for a big offensive in early 1944, at least in this sector. We stopped the night there and on the following night (29th) we went up to meet Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) Kiani at his Divisional Headquarters at Chamole. A number of Japanese press representatives had arrived in Moray and they wanted also to visit the frontline area. The road by which we went was entirely macadamized, broad and well graded. The journey was uneventful except in one place. Just before crossing a bridge across a deep

ravine we were stopped by a post sentry as some shells had been fired by the enemy in that area. After halting a little time, we moved on and reached our destination at about 11 o'clock in the night. We were met at the roadside, from where we went down the hill to the dugouts on the side of the hill where the Divisional Headquarters were located. The dugouts were scattered in different places. We were delighted to meet again our old friends Col. Kiani, Maj. Abid Hussain, Lt.-Col. Pritam Singh and others. Next morning the representatives of Japanese news agencies also came to see us near our dugouts. They wanted to take our photographs and requested us to go much higher up the hill and stand together in a more prominent place. I did not approve of the idea and at least not the site they had suggested, as the place was under enemy fire from time to time and as enemy planes were reconnoitring it. So I asked them to refer the matter to Col. Kiani as to where we were to stand, for he was better acquainted with the local conditions. Col. Kiani agreed that we should not go up to the place which had been selected. To meet the request of the representatives we agreed to stand at a place not very far from our dugouts. We were just standing together when one of the Japanese representatives asked me to change places with Col. Kiani and be more visible. As soon as we had done this, a shell burst more or less over the place which had been originally selected. Almost instantaneously one of us (the writer) was hurt in the abdomen by a shell splinter. Luckily the wound caused was superficial. But the progress of the splinter was extraordinary. It cut through the upper part of the Khaki trousers, went through the portion of the shirt under it, then through the underwear, then it scooped up a piece of the skin and subcutaneous tissue about two inches long and one inch wide from right to left, pierced again the trousers pocket and fell into it. The cut was clean like that made by a knife and there was no swinging anywhere although Lt.-Col. Allagappan mentioned that he had seen

a white flame coming towards me. The deflection of the splinter was miraculous.

We were highly delighted to meet here Lt.-Col. (now Col.) I. J. Kiani, Commander of the Gandhi Regiment, who had also by chance come to hold consultations with the Divisional Commander. From him we received first-hand information as to the actual conditions prevailing in the sector he was holding. He gave us some very valuable information. He narrated to us the exploits of his men and the utmost bravery they had shown when attacking the enemy lines, but he also reported the difficulties that were arising. The men had gone into battle with only ten days' rations. Sometimes several days passed and no rations arrived from the Japanese authorities. There was complete lack of transport for bags of rice, ammunition, and other material when they arrived at the Supply Depot located about three miles further north-west of Chamole near the main road to carry them to the Headquarters nearly 15 miles from the depot. All these had to be carried on the backs of the men which resulted not only in the men breaking down with fatigue, but a large number of them had to be taken away from the fighting line in order to carry out this work. This was very disheartening to the men as they wanted to do all the fighting for the liberation of their country and did not like to be employed in a merely negative capacity. Moreover, they did not have a sufficient number of ground sheets or waterproofs to protect them from the rain which was setting in. On account of the shortage of rations the men had to take to cooking grass, roots of trees and leaves of some trees that were available. Sometimes they went into the villages and brought some paddy which they boiled and took. He had also been experiencing another very great difficulty, which was the lack of sufficient means of communication. The Japanese had promised telephone or wireless communication, but they had failed so far to supply them directly to the units. Messengers had to go through the Japanese lines miles apart, and the difficulty of language

was also there. The net result was that if he had to ask for instructions from the Divisional Commander or to consult him on any important point, he had to send a runner who had to traverse nearly 18 miles each way, and had to pass through difficult terrain, subjected oftentimes to enemy ambush. Yet the men did this duty cheerfully. On one occasion, he narrated, one of his battalions was hard pressed, and he had to get instructions from the Divisional Commander as to the next move that he should take. The enemy was not far away. He sent for a runner and explained to him the distance he had to cover and the danger he had to run the risk of. The runner became impatient and said, "*Sab, enen gallan nu tu chad. Maunu das karna kiye*". (Sir, leave these things alone, tell me what I have to do). Then he explained that he must get a reply from the Divisional Commander within 24 hours. The man replied "*Mai leananga*" (I will bring it), and went about his duty. True to his word, he came back within 24 hours with the reply so urgently needed which made all the difference in the situation. The man travelled 36 miles within 24 hours. He narrated many other deeds of bravery. He also narrated to us that the villagers in his sector had already come to him for settlement of disputes, particularly those relating to land. He had agreed to settle the disputes provided they were ready to accept his judgment. Accordingly investigations were made and complaints were heard and judgment given. In the judgments it was also written that these findings would be upheld by the officers of the Government of the Liberated Areas whose Civil Administrators were coming up to take over the territory. The people readily accepted the findings and both parties were evidently satisfied. The people had given the Provisional Government of Free India the name 'Nai Sarkar'. The people had also asked for currency notes of our Government. They said they would much rather have that currency than accept Japanese military notes. We explained to them that the currency notes of the Provisional Government were



being prepared and expected fairly soon. All these points were valuable and significant and in the evening when we had the opportunity of meeting Lt.-Col. Fujiwama, we took them up for solution as far as possible.

It had been arranged that we should contact the Japanese Divisional Commander, with whose forces our troops were co-operating, but as it was not possible for me to do so at the time on account of the injury received, Lt.-Col. Allagappan went and saw him. Late in the afternoon Lt.-Col. Fujiwara, who was originally in Malaya, came to see me. I discussed with him the situation that had developed. I mentioned to him that (1) the Japanese had originally decided that the main role which the Azad Hind Fauj was going to play in the campaign was guerilla warfare, and accordingly arrangements and equipment were provided for that purpose; but now that the plans had been changed and the Japanese had requested the Azad Hind Fauj to fight a static war, adjustments had not been provided for this change; (2) that the Japanese had undertaken to arrange for (a) all supplies to the troops, (b) means of transport and (c) adequate means of communication. There was a complete breakdown in these for the time being. He made profuse apologies. He was extremely sorry for the lack of rations and absence of suitable transport, and promised to make his utmost effort to remedy the situation. He explained (a) that the Japanese had completely surrounded the British forces but they had expected to catch a comparatively small fish, while they now realized that they had caught a crocodile, (b) that they had expected to capture a large quantity of arms and ammunition and provisions with the capture of Manipur where the British had stored them, but that the delay in the fall of Manipur had made the situation difficult. He greatly appreciated the part played by the men and officers of the Azad Hind Fauj and the difficulties they had surmounted and the suffering they had undergone, for which he admired them. We held consultations with Col. Kiani

and noted down his request for the bringing up of the full strength of the Divisional Headquarters, particularly of supply and transport sections, to Moray. Major Abid Hussain had suggested that the services of eight Secret Service men from the Azad Hind Dal might be lent to the First Divisional Headquarters immediately so that these might be utilized (a) in doing propaganda work for the Azad Hind Fauj in the surrounding villages, (b) in doing counter-propaganda work against the enemy, (c) in procuring supplies for the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj and men of the Azad Hind Dal. We immediately agreed to this proposal.

We received information on our return to Moray that Col. Gulzara Singh with his 3rd Brigade had passed Moray and was on his way to his Headquarters at Mintha. Later we received information that he had established his Headquarters there and had taken up position for launching an attack on Palel from the east. His men had suffered a great deal from lack of water on their march from Kodama to Kalewa, but still they were in high spirits and took up their position on the hills overlooking the eastern end of Manipur plain. Soon after their arrival they had several skirmishes with the enemy troops, but they always gained the upper hand and drove the enemy further west. Unfortunately his Second-in-command, Major Prabu Dayal, deserted to the enemy. But his men stood firm and severely condemned his action.

We started on our return journey late in the evening and reached the Moray camp the same night. Early next morning Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) A. C. Allagappan left for Pingan to inspect the site and see to the possibilities of establishing an Advance Base Hospital for the reception and treatment of the sick and the wounded of the Azad Hind Fauj from the front-line areas. He visited the place and received an offer of all co-operation from the Commandant of the local Japanese Base Hospital. They pointed out a site which might be useful for the purpose and offered

to give any help that was needed. He came back and decided that as soon as possible a hospital should be established there.

Further, we directed the Secret Service men to report for duty at the Headquarters of the First Division. Four of them were allotted to each of the two Brigades. They showed extraordinary bravery and did their duty exceedingly well. They did excellent propaganda work and managed to obtain supplies as much as was possible and their work was highly appreciated. Incidentally, all these S.S. men were Bengalees. Their implicit devotion to duty in difficult circumstances showed that, given the opportunity and the responsibility, people belonging to the so-called non-martial races could show and have actually shown courage and devotion as well as any one else.

We stopped the night, and commenced our journey back to Maymyo on the following night. We passed through Kalewa again, and saw that remarkable improvements had been effected. Huts were already springing up and sufficient supplies had been procured. We passed through Yeu, picked up our cars and returned to Maymyo on the 7th June. We submitted a secret report to Netaji for his information and whatever action he deemed necessary, and sent it down by courier.

The material meant for the use of the Civil Administration in the liberated areas had begun to arrive in Maymyo. It was sorted out and repacked in smaller packages in order to facilitate easy transport over the mountainous track. A complete code for the administration of the liberated areas was prepared in order to help and guide the different Departments that were to start work when a large area was taken over. This was found essential as a number of our people, particularly those of the lower grade, required guidance although we fully expected that once we occupied Assam and Bengal, a large number of the local people would gladly come forward and join us and give us the benefit of their experience. Still, as it would take time, the interim period

had to be provided for in which chaos and confusion were likely to be at their highest. In order to minimise all these contingencies and help and guide our men working in the different Departments for the benefit of the people of the Liberated Areas, this Code was prepared. It gave the fullest information with regard to the principles which were to be followed by each Department, procedure of work, relationship of one Department with another and also with the Japanese military authorities, the principal officers concerned and their scope of work, the Departments with which each of them should have close liaison, the minimum staff together with their basic salaries etc.

So far as civil administration was concerned, the village was taken as the unit, and each village was to be in charge of a *mondol* or *mukhia*. Some of the particulars may be quoted below:—

Each *mondol* would have under him a number of *bishgharas* each in charge of 20 families. Each village would have a village *Panchayat* who were allotted administrative powers, both executive and judicial. Duties of the *bishgharas* included: (1) communicating orders, instructions and directives of higher authorities to their respective people, (2) reporting to the village *mondol* any information pertaining to births, deaths, marriages, fire, flood, robbery, loss of crops, arrival of suspicious persons, etc., (3) helping in the preparation of census of persons, cattle, property etc., and submitting the same to the village *mondol* or *mukhia*, (4) collecting all taxes and handing them over to the *mukhia*, (5) acting as village watchmen.

Duties of the *mondol* or *mukhia*: He was responsible (1) for collecting and transmitting information to the higher authorities; (2) for transmitting orders, instructions and directions to the villagers, through the *bishgharas*; (3) for supplying all information pertaining to births, deaths, marriages, fire, robbery, loss of crops etc. to the higher authorities, or any other information which they might ask for; (4) for collecting all facts and figures relating to census

of persons, cattle, property etc. and sending the same to the higher authorities; (5) for law and order.

**Duties of the Village Panchayat:** *Executive:* Responsible for the supervision and execution of works within the village area pertaining to sanitation, water supply, education and welfare. *Judicial:* (i) Civil: Settlement of all cases pertaining to (a) boundary disputes, (b) all rent cases not exceeding the value of Rs. 100/-. (ii) Criminal: All cases of threat, assault, simple hurt, theft of property, cattle, crop, fruits, defamation etc.

**Powers of punishment:** Compulsory labour for a period not exceeding a fortnight; fine not exceeding Rs. 50/- or both.

Ten villages were grouped into one and was called *Dasgaon* and an officer was put in charge of this unit.

**Duties:** Same as those of *mukhias*; over and above that he was responsible for depositing in the State Treasury all taxes collected from within his area. But he was not responsible for law and order.

A number of *dasgaons*, not exceeding 5, was formed into a *daira* (circle) which was put in charge of a whole-time officer—*Daira Officer*.

A number of circles, not exceeding 5, was formed into a *mahakuma* (sub-division) and was put in charge of a whole-time *Mahakuma Officer*.

A number of Sub-Divisions, not exceeding 5, was formed into a *zilla* (District) and was put in charge of a *Zilla Officer*. The work of the *Zilla Officer* was directly co-ordinated by the Secretary in charge of Internal Affairs at the Headquarters of the Provisional Government of the Liberated Area.

In Rangoon the activities of the Provisional Government and of the League were intensified in different directions. The Finance Department was greatly expanded to cope with the increased work. On the one hand there were demands of money to meet the expenses of the different Departments, while on the other there was greater urgency for exercising supervision and control over the expenses. N. Raghaban

arrived from Malaya and took over the Finance Department from me. A Planning Bureau was also established under his direction.

A contingent of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was sent up from Singapore and they arrived in Rangoon in April, 1944. Their arrival greatly roused the feelings of the local people in Rangoon and many women recruits were obtained locally. There was a Nursing division of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment whose members undertook special training in nursing the sick and wounded of the Indian National Army. A very suitable syllabus was prepared for their special training at the I.N.A. Hospital in Bidadari by Lt.-Col. (now Col.) Kasliwal. The same syllabus was used for the new entrants in Burma who were trained in a camp established in Rangoon.

The National Bank of Azad Hind Ltd. was established with a capital of one million rupees. It had a Board of Directorate of its own who controlled the operations of the Bank. It had its own Managing Secretary, D. N. Bhaduri, who was really the heart and soul of the Bank. The Bank received the deposits of the Indian commercial magnates and tradesmen and was a great success. All the surplus funds and treasures of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind were deposited with the Bank. The Bank also collected all the subscriptions and donations in kind and coin made to the Netaji Fund Committee by the different donors.

One of the results of our visit to the front line was the immediate establishment of a Ministry of Transport and greater intensification of the work of the Supply Department. Paramanand was appointed Minister of Supplies in succession to Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) Allagapan. Arrangements were made for the establishment of a larger supply depot in Mandalay and Advance Depots in Yeu, Kodama and other places along the road leading to the east bank of the Chindwin. Along this road provision was made for the establishment of camping grounds, water supply, and

sanitary posts for the troops. These were of very great help when they were constantly moving towards the front, and the more so in the later stages when they came back. This was organized under the instruction and direct supervision of Col. Arshad.

A Ministry of Revenue was also established and A. N. Sarkar was appointed the first Minister in charge of this Department. The Ziawadi estate was donated to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind by the proprietors of the estate who placed all its resources at the disposal of the Revenue Department. This magnificent offer greatly helped the Provisional Government in several ways. It trained men in technical matters such as Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Farming, etc. It had also established a factory for blanket-making, rope-making, mat-making, which it supplied to the Azad Hind Fauj. A huge poultry farm was established within the estate. Eggs from the poultry farm were supplied to the hospitals in large quantities. Other properties, both moveable and immovable, were donated and taken the care of by the Revenue Department.

Out of gratitude and joy which the people felt in Netaji's able leadership in the struggle for freedom of our Motherland, it was decided to celebrate fittingly the Netaji Week—4th to 11th July—in which Netaji took over that leadership in South-east Asia. It originated from Rangoon but it was celebrated everywhere where there was an Indian Independence League. Mass meetings were held and the National Tricolour was flown from every house. A Flag Salutation ceremony was performed and prayers were offered in places of worship of all denominations. Special editions of newspapers appeared. Large posters were printed and put up in prominent places. The poor and the destitute were fed. The League offices were decorated, and the week was celebrated in a befitting manner. Buildings were illuminated wherever they were out of range of enemy air activity. In Rangoon a special parade was held and a special display was given by the Rani of Jhansi Regiment and the Balsenas in

the presence of a large gathering which included Nangindaw Adi Padi Dr. Ba Maw and many of his Cabinet Ministers. They were greatly impressed by the display made by the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. Their notion about the docility and shyness of Indian women, whom they had seen before, was completely changed. Very often remarks were passed that although Burmese women were known to be more forward than Indian women in Burma, yet they had not openly taken up arms and formed military units as the members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment had done. The Balsena, although under training for a very short time, greatly impressed the gathering by their sense of discipline, smartness of appearance, accurate timing and agility of their movements. This exhibition greatly roused the enthusiasm of the people.

It was a curious coincidence that on the 4th July, the very date of the proclamation of the American Declaration of Independence, the dynamic personality of Netaji took over the helm of the Indian Independence Movement in South-east Asia.

During this week, Netaji made a series of speeches in Rangoon which were delivered at the several mass meetings and parades that were held there during the week. Some of his remarkable speeches were made at that time. These urges and appeals of his which raised the spirit of the people. These were broadcast all over East Asia. Some of the extracts from these are given below.

On the 4th July he addressed a large gathering of civilians in the Jubilee Hall in Rangoon and narrated the achievements made during the past twelve months. He said:—

“(i) We have been able to mobilise men, money and materials in accordance with the programme of ‘Total Mobilisation’.

(ii) We have trained our Army for a modern war and have expanded it considerably.



(iii) We have organized a Women's Section in our Army called the Rani of Jhansi Regiment.

(iv) We have set up our own Government, the *Arzi Hukumat-e-Hind*, and have obtained recognition from nine friendly Powers.

(v) We have acquired our first free territory in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

(vi) We pushed forward our Headquarters to Burma, and in February, 1944, we launched our War of Independence. On the 2nd March we were able to proclaim to the world that our troops were already in India.

(vii) We have considerably expanded the work of our Press—Propaganda—Publicity Department.

(viii) We have set up a new organisation called the Azad Hind Dal to take over the task of administration and reconstruction in Free India.

(ix) We have set up a Bank of our own in Burma—the National Bank of Azad Hind Ltd. We have placed orders for our own currency to circulate in Free India.

(x) We have been able to give a good account of ourselves in every sector of the fighting front and our troops have been pushing on inside India slowly but steadily in spite of all difficulties and hardships.

"There was a time when people had some doubts as to whether the Indian National Army would go into action and whether, if it went into action, it would really defeat the enemy troops. That test we have passed.

"Since fighting began on the soil of India, this war has become our own war and that feeling has brought a new inspiration not only to our own troops who are actually fighting, but also to those who are behind the lines.

"Up till now I have not received any complaints from our troops regarding the hardships that they are suffering. There has been only one complaint from the men and that has been against delay in sending them forward. For example, I recently visited a hospital where there were men who had either been wounded or stricken with malaria or

some other disease. All these troops expressed their desire to be sent back to the front as soon as they were well. These are men who fought at the front and they knew the conditions there and yet they were absolutely cheerful and optimistic.

"As long as there is no compromise between Mahatma Gandhi and the British Government, we have no reason to feel anxious. . . . So far there is absolutely no sign of a compromise, and what is exceedingly encouraging to us is that the statements Mahatma Gandhi has made up till now all point in one direction, and that is that he sees no reason to alter the attitude he took up about two years ago when he sponsored the 'Quit India' resolution."

On the 5th July, 1944, he addressed the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj and said:—

"The formation of the Azad Hind Fauj has been a source of extreme worry and anxiety to our enemies. They tried to ignore its existence for a time, but when the news could no longer be suppressed, their organ—the anti-Indian Radio at Delhi—started propaganda to the effect that Indian prisoners of war under Japanese control had been coerced into joining the army. This propaganda could not, however, endure long, because the news began to infiltrate into India that large numbers of Indian civilians from all parts of East Asia were joining the Azad Hind Fauj. The experts of the anti-India Radio had, therefore, to alter their tactics. They then started fresh propaganda to the effect that Indian prisoners of war had refused to join the Azad Hind Fauj and that thereupon, Indian civilians were being forced into joining that army. It did not probably strike the wiseacres at Delhi that if it was impossible to coerce prisoners of war into joining the army, it was even more impossible to coerce free civilians into becoming soldiers. Anybody who has a grain of common sense will realise that though a mercenary army can be organised by coercion, a volunteer army can never be so organised. You can perhaps force a man to shoulder a rifle, but you can never

make him fight to give his life for a cause which is not his own.

"At an early stage our enemies used to say that the Azad Hind Fauj was no army—that it was a mere propaganda stunt—and that it would never fight. Later on, the anti-Indian Radio at Delhi began to shout that the Azad Hind Fauj had not crossed the frontier of India. Now that the frontier has been crossed and the battle of India's freedom is being waged on Indian soil, enemy propagandists have taken recourse to a last desperate trick. They are now inventing a fictitious date supposed to have been given out by us for our entry into Delhi and are abusing us for not reaching our destination according to schedule.

"Friends, the Azad Hind Fauj is an army which is not only composed of Indians, but it has also been trained by Indians. That Army is today fighting under Indian officers.

"The Azad Hind Fauj is the military organ of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. The Provisional Government and its Army are the servants of the Indian nation. Their task is to fight and to liberate India. When that liberation is achieved, it will be for the Indian people to determine the form of Government that they desire.'

On the 6th July Netaji addressed Mahatma Gandhi over the radio. This was really a heart-to-heart talk. He spoke frankly without hiding anything. He said:—

"I should next like to say something about the attitude of your countrymen outside India towards yourself. What I shall say in this connection is the bare truth and nothing but the truth.

"There are Indians outside India, as also at home, who are convinced that Indian Independence will be won only through the historic method of struggle. These men and women honestly feel that the British Government will never surrender to persuasion or moral pressure or non-violent resistance. Nevertheless, for Indians outside India, differences in method are like domestic differences.

"Ever since you sponsored the Independence Resolution at the Lahore Congress in December, 1929, all members of the Indian National Congress have had one common goal before them. For Indians outside India, you are the creator of the present awakening in our country. In all their propaganda before the world, they give you that position and the respect that is due to that position. For the world public, we Indian nationalists are all one—having but one goal, one desire and one endeavour in life. In all the countries free from British influence that I have visited since I left India in 1941, you are held in the highest esteem, as no other Indian political leader had been during the last century.

"Each nation has its own internal politics and its own attitude towards political problems. But that cannot affect a Nation's appreciation of a man who has served his people so well and has bravely fought a first-class modern Power all his life. In fact, your worth and your achievements are appreciated a thousand times more in those countries that are opposed to the British Empire than in those countries that pretend to be the friends of Freedom and Democracy. The high esteem in which you are held by patriotic Indians outside India and by foreign friends of India's freedom was increased a hundredfold when you bravely sponsored the 'Quit India' Resolution in August, 1942.

"From my experience of the British Government while I was inside India—from the secret information that I have gathered about Britain's policy while outside India—and from what I have seen regarding Britain's aims and intentions throughout the world, I am honestly convinced that the British Government will never recognise India's demand for independence. Britain's one effort today is to exploit India to the fullest degree, in her endeavour to win this war. During the course of this war, Britain has lost one part of her territory to her enemies and another part to her friends. Even if the Allies could somehow win the

war, it will be United States of America, and not Britain, that will be top dog in future and it will mean that Britain will become a *protege* of the U.S.A. \* \* \* \*

'If circumstances had made it possible for us to organise an armed struggle inside India through our own efforts and resources, that would have been the best course for us. But, Mahatmaji, you know Indian conditions perhaps better than anybody else. So far as I am concerned, after twenty years' experience of public service in India, I came to the conclusion that it was impossible to organize an armed resistance in the country without some help from outside—help from our countrymen abroad, as well as from some foreign Power or Powers.

"Prior to the outbreak of the present war, it was exceedingly difficult to get help from a foreign Power, or even from Indians abroad. But the outbreak of the present war threw open the possibility of obtaining aid—both political and military—from the enemies of the British Empire. Before I could expect any help from them, however, I had first to find out what their attitude was towards India's demand for freedom. British propagandists, for a number of years, had been telling the world that the Axis Powers were the enemies of Freedom and, therefore, of India's freedom. Was that a fact, I asked myself. Consequently, I had to leave India in order to find out the truth myself and as to whether the Axis Powers would be prepared to give us help and assistance in our fight for freedom.

"Before I finally made up my mind to leave home and homeland, I had to decide whether it was right for me to take help from abroad. I had previously studied the history of revolutions all over the world, in order to discover the methods which had enabled other nations to obtain freedom. But I had not found a single instance in which an enslaved people had won freedom without foreign help of some sort. In 1940, I read my history once again, and once again I came to the conclusion that history did not furnish a single instance where freedom had been won without help of some

sort from abroad. As for the moral question whether it was right to take help, I told myself that in public, as in private life, one can always take help as a loan and repay that loan later on. Moreover, if a powerful Empire, like the British Empire, could go round the world with the begging bowl, what objection could there be to an enslaved and disarmed people like ourselves taking help as a loan from abroad?

"I can assure you, Mahatmaji, that before I finally decided to set out on a hazardous mission, I spent days, weeks and months in carefully considering the *pros* and *cons* of the case. After having served my people so long to the best of my ability, I could have no desire to be a traitor or to give anyone a justificaion for calling me a traitor.

"It was the easiest thing for me to remain at home and go on working as I had worked so long. It was also an easy thing for me to remain in an Indian prison while the war lasted. Personally, I had nothing to lose by doing so. Thanks to the generosity and to the affection of my countrymen, I had obtained the highest honour which it was possible for any public worker in India to achieve. I had also built up a party consisting of staunch and loyal colleagues who had implicit confidence in me.

"By going abroad on a perilous quest, I was risking—not only my life and my whole future career—but what was more, the future of my party. If I had the slightest hope that without action abroad we could win freedom, I would never have left India during a crisis. If I had any hope that within our lifetime we would get another chance—another golden opportunity—for winning freedom, as during the present war, I doubt if I would have set out from home. But I was convinced of two things; firstly, that such a golden opportunity would not come within another century—and secondly, that without action from abroad, we would not be able to win freedom merely through our

own efforts at home. That is why I resolved to take the plunge. \* \* \* \*

"Not even my worst enemy can ever dare to say that I am capable of selling national honour and self-respect. And not even my worst enemy can dare to assert that I was a nobody in my own country and that I needed foreign help to secure a position for myself. In leaving India, I had to risk everything that I had, including my life. But I had to take that risk because only by doing so could I help in the achievement of India's freedom.

"There remains but one question for me to answer with regard to the Axis Powers. Can it be possible that I have been deceived by them?

"I believe it will be universally admitted that the cleverest and the most cunning politicians are to be found amongst Britishers. One who has worked with and fought British politicians all his life cannot be deceived by any other politician in the world. If British politicians have failed to coax or coerce me, no other politician can succeed in doing so. And if the British Government, at whose hands I have suffered long imprisonment, persecution and physical assault, has been unable to demoralise me, no other Power can hope to do so. \* \* \* \* \*

"Mahatmaji, since the beginning of the War in East Asia, our enemies have been carrying on a raging and tearing campaign against Japan. I shall, therefore, say something about Japan particularly because at the present moment I am working in the closest co-operation with the Government, Army and people of Japan.

"There was a time when Japan had an alliance with our enemy. I did not come to Japan so long as there was an Anglo-Japanese alliance. I did not come to Japan so long as normal diplomatic relations obtained between the two countries. It was only after Japan took what I consider to be the most momentous step in her history—namely, declaration of war on Britain and America—that I decided to visit Japan of my own free will.

"Like so many of my countrymen, I had read anti-Japanese propaganda material for a number of years. Like so many of my countrymen, I did not understand why Japan went to war with China in 1937. And like so many of my countrymen, my sympathies in 1937 and 1938 were with Chungking. You may remember that as President of the Congress, I was responsible for sending out a medical mission to Chungking in December, 1938. But what I realised after my visit to Japan and what many people at home do not yet realise is that since the outbreak of the War in East Asia, Japan's attitude towards the world in general, and towards Asiatic nations in particular, has been completely revolutionised.

"It is a change that has overtaken not merely the Government but also the people of Japan. A new consciousness has seized the soul of the people of Japan. That change explains Japan's attitude towards the Philippines, Burma and India. That is what explains Japan's new policy in China.

"After my visit to Japan and after establishing close contact with the present-day leaders of that country, I was fully satisfied that Japan's policy towards Asia was no bluff but was rooted in sincerity.

"This is not the first instance in history when an entire nation has been seized with a new consciousness. We have seen instances of it before in France during the French Revolution and in Russia during the Bolshevik Revolution. After my second visit to Japan in November, 1943, I visited the Philippines, met Filipino leaders there and saw things for myself. I have also been in Burma for a fairly long time and I have been able to see things with my own eyes, after the declaration of independence. And I have been to China to find out if Japan's new policy was real, or if it was a fake. The latest agreement between Japan and the National Government of China has given the Chinese people practically all that they had been demanding.



Japan, under that agreement, has even agreed to withdraw her troops from China on the termination of hostilities.

"What, then, is Chungking-China fighting for? Can one believe that Britain and America are helping Chungking-China out of purely altruistic motives? Will not Britain and America demand their pound of flesh in return for the help that they are now giving to Chungking to make her continue the fight against Japan? I clearly see that Chungking is being mortgaged to Britain and America, because of past hatred and antagonism towards Japan.

"So long as Japan did not initiate her present policy towards China, might have been some justification or excuse for the Chinese to seek British and American aid for fighting Japan. But now that an entirely new chapter in Sino-Japanese relations has begun, there is not the slightest excuse for Chungking to continue her meaningless struggle against Japan. That is not good for the Chinese people; it is certainly not good for Asia.

"In April, 1942, you said that if you were free to do so, you would work for an understanding between China and Japan. That was an utterance of rare statesmanship. It is India's slavery that is, at the bottom, responsible for the chaos in China. It is because of the British hold over India that the Anglo-Americans could bluff Chungking into hoping that sufficient help could be brought to Chungking to enable Chungking to continue the war against Japan. You were absolutely right in thinking, Mahatmaji, that a free India would work for peace between Japan and China. I go so far as to say that the freedom of India will automatically bring about an honourable understanding between Chungking and Japan by opening the eyes of Chungking to the folly that she is now committing.

"Since I came to East Asia and visited China, I have been able to study the Chinese question more deeply. I find that there is a dictatorship ruling in Chungking. I have no objection personally to dictatorship if it is for a righteous cause. But the dictatorship that rules at

Chungking is clearly under foreign American influence. Unfortunately, the Anglo-Americans have been able to deceive the ruling clique at Chungking into thinking that if Japan could somehow be defeated, then China would become the dominant Power in Asia. The fact, however, is that if Japan were defeated by any chance, then China would certainly pass under American influence and control. That would be a tragedy for China and for the whole of Asia. \* \* \* \* \*

"Mahatmaji, you know better than anybody else how deeply suspicious the Indian people are of mere promises. I would be the last man to be influenced by Japan if her declarations of policy had been mere promises. But I have seen with my own eyes how, in the midst of a world war, Japan has put through revolutionary changes in countries like the Philippines, Burma and National China. Japan is true to her word and her actions are in full conformity with her declarations.

"Coming to India, I must say that Japan has proved her sincerity by her deeds. There was a time when people used to say that Japan had selfish intentions regarding India. If she had them, why should she recognise the Provisional Government of Free India? Why should she decide to hand over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Free India? Why should there now be an Indian Chief Commissioner of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands stationed at Port Blair? Last but not least, why should Japan unconditionally help the Indian people in East Asia in their struggle for independence?

"There are Indians all over East Asia and they have every opportunity of seeing Japan at close quarters. Why should three million Indians, distributed all over East Asia, adopt a policy of the closest co-operation with Japan if they had not been convinced of her bonafides and of her sincerity? You can coerce one man or coax him into doing what you want him to do. But no one can coerce three million Indians distributed all over East Asia.

"If Indians in East Asia had taken help from Japan without putting forward their own efforts and without making the maximum sacrifice, they would have been guilty of wrong-doing. But, as an Indian, I am happy and proud to be able to say that my countrymen in East Asia are putting forward the maximum efforts to mobilise men, money and materials for the struggle for India's freedom.

"I have had experience at home in collecting funds and materials and in recruiting for national service for a period of twenty years. In the light of the experience, I can properly assess the worth and value of the sacrifice that our countrymen in East Asia are now making. Their effort is magnificent. It is because they are putting forward a magnificent effort themselves and are prepared to make the maximum sacrifice that I see no objection to taking help from Japan for such necessary articles as arms, ammunition, etc. that we ourselves cannot produce.

"Mahatmaji, I should now like to say something about the Provisional Government that we have set up here. The Provisional Government of Azad Hind (or Free India) has been recognized by Japan, Germany and seven other friendly Powers and this has given Indians a new status and a new prestige in the eyes of the whole world. The Provisional Government has, as its one objective, the liberation of India from the British yoke through an armed struggle. Once our enemies are expelled from India and peace and order is established, the mission of the Provisional Government will be over. It will then be for the Indian people themselves to determine the form of Government that they choose and also to decide as to who should take charge of that Government.

"I can assure you, Mahatmaji, that I and all those who are working with me regard themselves as the servants of the Indian people. The only reward that we desire for our efforts, for our suffering and for our sacrifice is the freedom of our Motherland. There are many among us who would like to retire from the political field once India is free. The

remainder will be content to take up any position in Free India, however humble it may be. The spirit that animates all of us today is that it is more honourable to be even a sweeper in Free India than to have the highest position under British rule. We all know that there are hundreds of thousands of able men and women at home to whom India's destiny could be entrusted once freedom is achieved.

"How much help we shall need from Japan till the last Britisher is expelled from the soil of India will depend on the amount of co-operation that we shall receive from inside India. Japan herself does not desire to thrust her assistance upon us. Japan would be happy if the Indian people could liberate themselves through their own exertions. It is we who have asked for assistance from Japan after declaring war on Britain and America, because our enemy has been asking help from other Powers. However, I have every hope that the help we shall receive from countrymen at home will be so great that we shall need the minimum help from Japan.

"Nobody would be more happy than ourselves if, by any chance, our countrymen at home should succeed in liberating themselves through their own efforts or if, by any chance, the British Government accepts your 'Quit India' Resolution and gives effect to it. We are, however, proceeding on the assumption that neither of the above is possible and that an armed struggle is inevitable. \* \* \* \*

"India's last War of Independence has begun. Troops of the Azad Hind Fauj are now fighting bravely on the soil of India and in spite of all difficulty and hardships they are pushing forward, slowly but steadily. This armed struggle will go on until the last Britisher is thrown out of India and until our Tricolour National Flag proudly flies over the Viceroy's House in New Delhi.

"Father of our nation! In this holy war for India's liberation, we ask for your blessings and good wishes.  
*Jai Hind.*"

*Maymyo Indian Independence League:*

After our recovery from the attack of malaria which Col. Allagapan and myself had contracted on our way back from Kalewa, we devoted our attention to (1) increasing the activities of the local Independence League, (2) providing for the steady supply of articles needed, and (3) recruitment for the Guerilla Regiments.

The activities of the local League were intensified. Lachman Singh Sahib, who was the Chairman, was a very sincere and honest worker. The Netaji Week which was started in Rangoon was celebrated in Maymyo by feeding the poor, dramatic performances and sports, in which the local Burmese population fully participated. Widespread propaganda work was done intensively amongst the population. Two members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment volunteered to do this work, particularly amongst the Gurkhas who had settled in that area. The response was excellent. The Gurkhas recruited from the areas were sent in batches to Rangoon to join the Gurkha Regiment that was being formed. A successful drive was made to collect funds. The milkmen in that area offered to provide *ghee* and dried *khoa* for the use of the members of the Azad Hind Fauj and for the patients in the hospital. This was very encouraging as our men were longing to taste good *ghee* and they needed it, too. Groups of Balsenas were organised and they were of great help in augmenting the spirit of the people. Parties of Azad Hind Dal men were sent forward to the frontline area.

The 4th Guerilla Regiment had in the meantime arrived in Mandalay and was getting ready to go forward. There was some trouble in the regiment due to mishandling of the men. Netaji had an enquiry held and transferred the Commanding Officer. He spoke to the men sternly and appointed Lt.-Col. Dhillon, who was a strict disciplinarian and an efficient officer, the Commander of the Regiment.

A number of trained nurses went up towards the front area and were stationed at the Advance Base Hospital in Maymyo. They carried out their duties very creditably under aerial bombardment and machinegun fire from enemy planes. It was evident that their training was thorough. Another contingent of the combatant soldiers of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment also arrived in Maymyo towards the end of April, 1944. Throughout their stay in Maymyo the Nursing Section was very well spoken of by all concerned—doctors as well as patients. The patients' appreciation of the services rendered by the nurses was very great. A remarkable incident happened in Maymyo which showed what love and respect they had for the nurses. One of the nurses had appeared in the examination for qualification after completion of her training. She had done very well in the practical examination but her powers of expression in English were not up to the standard and she had failed in her written examination by a few marks. Many of the patients were as disappointed when they heard of her failure as she was. Shortly after this, Netaji went to inspect the Hospital. When he was inside the ward where this particular nurse was working many of the patients got round Netaji and insisted that this particular nurse should be allowed to pass. They said they were highly satisfied with the service she was rendering them as their nurse, even their mothers and sisters could not do more. They enquired what more was required of her if she could render practical service to them which was more important than writing papers in English. This put Netaji in a rather awkward position but on account of the soldiers' insistence that she should be accepted as a qualified nurse and ward doctors' recommendations Netaji ultimately granted the prayer of the soldiers.

While Netaji was staying at Maymyo a special Japanese military officer arrived from Tokyo to get Netaji's final approval of the designs of the currency notes which had been prepared and also to take his signature on them for

final printing. The designs were beautiful and well printed. Important architectural beauties and natural scenery in India formed the important features of the designs. The colouring was also very attractive. The water-marks and the printing were excellent. Netaji approved of these currency notes which were of the following denominations: As. -|2|- , As. -|4|- , As. -|8|- , Re. 1|- , Rs. 5|- and Rs. 50|- . He instructed the Japanese officer also to get notes of one anna (-|1|-) of a suitable design printed.

What we had seen in Rangoon and Mandalay with regard to devastation was further confirmed by our experience in Maymyo. The Maymyo Bazar was largely destroyed, so also the residential quarters of the Indians round about that place; but further beyond, where the Europeans lived, the houses were almost completely intact. It seemed that the fury of the Chinese and the British Armies was let loose over the Indians and the Asiatics, while property and buildings belonging to Europeans were left more or less untouched.

## CHAPTER XII

### THE WITHDRAWAL

The rains set in much earlier than usual which made the condition of the road very bad, particularly in the Kawbaw Valley. This further made the supply of rations and ammunition to the troops in the front line very very difficult. The men were already tired, starved, and fatigued. Many of them had fallen victims to dysentery and relapse of malaria. A crisis had appeared, and a decision had to be taken as to the next step. The situation which had developed on the Indo-Burma frontier could not be allowed to continue any longer. There were only two possible alternatives, (a) either to attack or (b) to withdraw to a more favourable position. The army was still victorious, and it was possible to launch a vigorous attack and capture Imphal by main assault. The process of inanition by which Japanese strategy had hoped to reduce the besieged garrison on the Imphal plain had failed to achieve its object, for the enemy had dropped supplies by aeroplanes in large quantities to its besieged troops. Although the enemy, too, was compelled to cut its ration by 50 per cent for over a period of two months, still its standard was so high that even with half the quantity of the food available it could maintain its men in a fair condition. Even if it were possible to capture Imphal, it was extremely problematic whether it would have been possible to defend it and maintain it against increased enemy air activities and the enemy's concerted attempt to break through the chain of the siege and reinforce its garrison in Imphal. There was a time when it seemed the enemy was going to surrender. Actual signs were seen—large collections of empty trucks at different places near Palel for the evacuation of the garrison there; but evidently on receipt of instructions through wireless from the South-



east Asia Command in Colombo that the monsoon was progressing strongly, and was expected to break out in the hills very soon the garrison held out and did not surrender. On the other hand, if we had gone down from the hills to the plains of Imphal, we would have been subjected to very heavy enemy action, particularly from the air. With a broken down physique it might not have been possible to maintain the defence in the plains. The Japanese had also suffered in the same way. Therefore Netaji decided that it was better to withdraw from the position and return to Burma near bases of supply where the troops could be rested and well fed, so that they could regain their health and when the opportunity occurred again, a second attempt could be made to regain the lost position and re-enter India. It was considered better also not to allow the enemy to inflict a direct defeat on our troops.

When the instructions of Netaji were announced to the troops, there was a general sense of acute disappointment. The consensus of opinion was that they did not like to withdraw from the place where they were. They would stay, fight, and die in their positions rather than withdraw. After a great deal of explanation regarding the significance of the order, the men and officers were persuaded to withdraw from their positions. Accordingly the withdrawal started all along the line from Kohima, Chamol, Bishenpur, Haka, Falam and Kaladan. The conditions were extremely difficult. The major part of the journey, and particularly the difficult part of the journey, had to be done on foot. The men were largely suffering from the effects of very low rations which practically meant starvation. They were also suffering from malaria and dysentery.

Troops from the Kohima front under Lt.-Col. (now Maj.-Gen.) Shah Nawaz Khan came down on foot as far as Sittang from where they went down the Chindwin river up to a distance and crossed over to Kindat. From there a large number of them went on foot along the river and reached Kalewa and thence to Budlin. This march was

really heroic. The men carried most of the sick men half of whom unfortunately perished on the way. This march will ever remain an epic of willing suffering, determination and patriotism.

Troops under Lt.-Col. (now Col.) I. J. Kiani came down the Manipur Hills to Moray. Some of them trekked down to Sittang, while others followed the Kabaw Valley and reached Kalewa from where they crossed the Chindwin river and went to Yeu.

Troops under Col. S. A. Malik from Bishenpur area came down *via* Tiddim to Kalewa and crossed the Chindwin.

These marches under very difficult and trying conditions were a very remarkable feature. Although they were withdrawing suffering from disease, fatigue, and lack of food, still their morale was high. Many instances occurred which showed their high morale and faith in ultimate victory. The word *Jai Hind* was on the lips of everybody, particularly at the times when they encountered any difficulties. The hill streams were in spate in many places and as the bridges had practically all been destroyed, the men had to swim or wade through neck-deep water. In attempting to cross these rivers, in their weakened physical conditions, many were swept away by the torrents. Many men were heard crying *Jai Hind* as they were being swept away or drowned. In one instance, a man could not walk any further as he had been suffering from acute dysentery. He lay down on the roadside and was in his last breath. Accidentally his brother was also with him. The brother, who was healthy and had been helping him so far, began to cry on seeing him in his last condition. He, lying down on the ground, told him not to cry. He said, "Give my *Jai Hind* to Netaji, and tell him that I have done my duty as best I could. I wish I could kill more of the enemy before I had died, but I can no longer do so, but you promise to me that you will go on fighting till our Motherland is free". This showed the indomitable courage and determination of our troops. To have a high morale when

everything was going on according to schedule in a winning battle was one thing, but it was wholly different and of much higher value when such high morale could be maintained and exhibited at a time of distress and suffering and when the enemy was having the better of the fight. Nevertheless our troops gradually came down and crossed the Chindwin river and took up a line of defence along the east bank of the Chindwin, Budlin-Monywa-Minjun.

As the troops of the 2nd Regiment and those belonging to the First Divisional Headquarters had greatly suffered and were largely diminished in number, they were ordered to proceed direct to Mandalay. Large numbers of them had to be admitted into hospital in Mandalay and those who were serious were sent to the base hospital at Maymyo in order to facilitate their early recovery. The First Brigade was ordered to take up position at Budlin while the Third Brigade was ordered to take up the defence line at Minjun further south. An Advance Base Hospital had already been established at Monywa under the command of late Maj. Rangachari. This hospital was constantly under aerial bombardment by the enemy, but still it functioned very well under the circumstances. Throughout the withdrawal the enemy not only could not inflict any defeat on our troops but could not even arrive at the places evacuated within two or three days of the evacuation, except only in one place along the Moray-Sittang road, where a part of our troops had almost become surrounded by them. The majority of our troops got through the encirclement, but a few, particularly those who were sick, fell into the hands of the enemy.

After the withdrawal of the 1st Division to the east bank of the Chindwin our forces were stationed as follows:

Divisional Headquarters	.. Mandalay
No. 1 Brigade	.. Budlin
No. 2 Brigade	.. Mandalay
No. 3 Brigade	.. Toungoo

There was a Base Hospital at Monywa and Maymyo and a large temporised Hospital at Mandalay.

As a large number of the troops who arrived at Mandalay were sick, the hospital in Mandalay had to be very much expanded. Arrangements were made for the supply of milk to the sick and under-nourished. In this matter the local Indian population and the Indian Independence League greatly helped. Seeing the condition of the troops and having heard their reports, I thought it advisable to go down to Rangoon immediately and ask Netaji to come up and see them. I was sure that on seeing him they would be greatly heartened. I came up with Netaji about the middle of July, 1944. He visited the patients in the hospital and talked to them. Although the patients had suffered so much, immediately on seeing Netaji they shouted *Jai Hind* with joy and it was evident that their morale was still high. He made several inspections of the troops located in the different camps. He talked to them freely and informally addressed them. The whole atmosphere in the camps changed. The feeling of despondency which had appeared in some of those who had undergone tremendous privations and had practically nothing left with them disappeared and they were keen, as soon as they could get some nourishment, to return to the front and fight again. After a careful inspection of the troops of the 2nd Regiment it was found that a large number of them were then physically unfit for fighting. Many of the hospital patients and even some of the men not actually diseased had broken down in health so much that they would take a long time to recover and gain physical fitness. It was decided, therefore, to establish a special hospital in Kalaw in the Southern Shan States and also establish a convalescent depot for persons who had broken down in health but were actually not diseased or wounded. Eventually when the convalescent depot and hospital were opened there, a good part of the 2nd Regiment proceeded to that place. On Netaji's arrival at Mandalay, the whole tone of the civilian population

was also greatly strengthened. On the one hand they had admired the determination and fortitude of the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj who had returned from the front line, but on the other they were depressed on account of the failure of the troops to achieve immediate victory and penetrate farther into India. However, rallies and meetings were held to rouse the enthusiasm of the people. These had the desired effect and the people rallied round the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and set to work hard and helped their utmost in feeding the army and providing all the material they could get together that was required for the re-equipment of the men of the Azad Hind Fauj and of the Azad Hind Dal.

Mandalay, as well as Maymyo, were constantly under enemy aerial bombardment. Mandalay had already been thoroughly devastated. It had its first strafing from Japanese aeroplanes during their attack in April, 1942, but that was largely restricted to military establishments and railway stations. But when the Allied troops evacuated Mandalay during the retreat they carried out the 'scorched earth' policy, and destroyed and burnt houses, godowns, shops etc. The 'scorched earth' policy was carried out largely by the Chinese Army. British aeroplanes had started to bombard the town again. They largely restricted their bombardment to the railway stations and the godowns, but there was not much left of Mandalay town by this time except the houses and bungalows of the Europeans. These had not been touched even by the Chinese.

Netaji also visited Maymyo and stayed there for some time looking after the arrangements for the expansion of this hospital which was found necessary for the treatment of a large number of serious cases from Mandalay. The climate of Maymyo, situated on a hill, was much more bracing than that of Mandalay, and so the chances of early recovery of the patients were much better in Maymyo. Therefore, it was decided to expand the hospital as much

as possible. This also relieved the congestion of the hospitals in Mandalay.

Meetings and rallies were also held in Maymyo. A variety entertainment was organised by the officers and men of the Azad Hind Fauj, the Azad Hind Dal and the Rani of Jhansi Regiment in which almost all the senior officers present in the station partook. It was greatly appreciated by the troops. After the variety entertainment the troops were entertained to a special dinner. Everyone squatted on the wooden floor in true Indian style and Netaji felt very happy when he also sat down to dinner with his beloved officers and men.

The British had dropped spies from aeroplanes. The Japanese Military Police and our own Intelligence personnel had warned us about the danger of moving about at night unguarded. One spy was actually captured. There were other agents within the town of Maymyo who tried to play mischief but were suitably dealt with. During Netaji's stay in Maymyo there were several heavy bombardments and machinegunning by enemy aeroplanes. On one occasion, late in the afternoon, I was going to see patients in the hospital as well as the contingent of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment which was located near it. All of a sudden a large enemy fighter-bomber appeared flying very low. We put the car under a tree and myself and Maj. Rawat, who was with me, went behind a tree. The driver went underneath a culvert. We thought that as there was only a single plane, we would not be visible behind the tree and if the plane circled round we would also go round the tree. Maj. Rawat suddenly left the tree and ran away to take shelter in a trench further away. Within a few seconds another plane appeared from the opposite direction, and then it seemed to me that my time was up and it was impossible to take shelter behind a tree with a plane on either side. Luckily there were some bushes not far off and I made for them. The planes passed over me and evidently could not locate me. I made another dash and

reached the big trench in which Maj. Rawat was. He had shouted for me but nothing could be heard on account of the roar of the planes. As soon as I was in the trench there was furious machinegun-firing over the tree under which the trench was located. Luckily neither myself nor Maj. Rawat was hurt.

At the time when the first plane appeared, a lorry carrying a number of troops of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment and A. M. Sahay, Secretary of the Provisional Government of Free India, was proceeding along the road at some distance in front of us, but we had not noticed it at the time. When we returned to our car, we saw them and they narrated their extraordinary experience. They said that the plane had passed immediately in front of them. Although a few of them had got down and tried to take shelter, most of them were still in the lorry. They could even see the pilot of the plane and were therefore an easy target. The pilot must have been looking ahead and went past them without doing any damage.

In Maymyo several bombardments had already taken place. Some of the troops of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, some officers of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind and some troops of the Azad Hind Fauj were occupying the premises of a school. Two attempts had previously been made to blast out these premises by aerial bombing. On the first occasion, a series of bombs fell far away at the back of the premises. On the second occasion, they fell well in front of them, but on the third occasion, which was on the day immediately following the evening on which the variety entertainment was given to the sick and wounded and other troops of the Azad Hind Fauj and Azad Hind Dal, they demolished a large part of those buildings. A miraculous thing happened. A bomb dropped right on the top of that portion of the premises in which the troops of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment were living. It was completely razed to the ground. Luckily, as soon as the siren had sounded on the approach of the enemy planes

the troops of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment had quickly gone out of the premises and taken shelter in the trenches close by. The portion of the building, as it fell down, almost completely covered the trench in which a part of the troops of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment had taken shelter, but luckily no one was hurt. One of them crawled out through a small opening and shouted for help, which was immediately rendered by the other troops who were near by. All the debris were removed quickly and the buried personnel were extricated. No one was any the worse for the experience they had. They had lost all their belongings, but they were just as cheerful and went into their new quarters as soon as necessary instructions had been issued.

After finishing his work in Maymyo, Netaji went back to Rangoon again.

Intelligence reports came regarding the advance of the enemy towards the east bank of the Chindwin river. The Japanese outpost in Maymyo, Lashio and other places also reported about enemy advance from the north and about the dropping of enemy paratroops in several places. I was advised to go down to Rangoon with my men and material as early as possible; but I decided to stay on as long as possible, until it was absolutely necessary, and informed Netaji accordingly. Later on, advice from the Japanese authorities who were in control of the railway between Mandalay and Rangoon showed that many portions of the railway had been severely damaged by enemy aerial bombardment and they said it was getting more and more difficult to transport men and material quickly, and they advised me again to leave Maymyo as soon as possible. I wrote to Netaji informing him of the situation and mentioned to him that I would not leave the place unless everybody who wanted to go with me, including civilians, was provided with suitable transport for their evacuation. In accordance with this I made inquiries from the Chairman and other officials of the Indian Independence League



both in Maymyo and Mandalay and ascertained their views in the matter. They were perfectly calm and said they would prefer to stay in their homes and were not afraid of any eventualities. As I had a very large quantity of material collected in Maymyo, and seeing the difficulties of transport, I decided to shift my base to Ziawadi and informed Netaji accordingly. The entire material was shifted to Ziawadi although it took some time to do so. The men of the Azad Hind Dal as well as of the Azad Hind Fauj, who accompanied the material, had to work very hard, for they had to carry the loads, which were heavy, on their shoulders for long distances at times, but everything reached Ziawadi safely, where the base was established, men were lodged and material stored in huts specially constructed for the purpose in a place well away from the sugar factory area in Ziawadi which was a target for the enemy.

About the middle of October I went down to Rangoon and took up my quarters there. I saw Netaji and explained to him the situation.

Netaji had studied our joint report and the special notes that I had submitted later. He also established a new Department which was called the Department of Production and put B. Ghosh, Sebak-e-Hind, in charge of it. He was an experienced engineer and could produce many articles and construct buildings and huts as required by the Azad Hind Fauj or the Provisional Government.

Netaji on his return to Rangoon held a Cabinet meeting in which he explained the situation. Extracts from what he said are given below:—

“We started operations too late. The monsoon was disadvantageous to us. Our roads were submerged. River traffic had to be against the current. Against this, the enemy had first-class roads. Our only chance was to take Imphal before the rains started, and we would have succeeded if we had more air support and if their force in Imphal had not had special orders to make a stand to the

last man. If we had started in January, we would have succeeded. In all sectors till the rains began, we either held the enemy or advanced. In the Arakan sector the enemy was held. In the Kaladan sector we routed the enemy and advanced. In Tiddim we advanced; in Palel and Kohima also we advanced. In the Haka sector we held them. And all these in spite of the numerical superiority that the enemy had, plus equipment and rations.

"When the rains came we had to postpone the general assault on Imphal. The enemy was able to send mechanized divisions and thus able to retake the Kohima-Imphal Road. The question then arose where we should hold the line. There were two courses open: either hold on to the Bishenpur-Palel line and not allow the enemy to advance, or fall back and hold a more advantageous position. We have chosen the latter course.

"We have received our baptism of fire. A body of ex-civilians who were ordered to withdraw when the ammunition was exhausted preferred not to withdraw and with fixed bayonets charged the enemy. They came back victorious.

"We have learnt that the Indian troops with the enemy are willing to come over. We have learnt the tactics of the enemy. We have captured enemy documents. The experience gained by our Commanders has been invaluable. Before the campaign started, the Japanese had no confidence in our troops and wanted to break them up into batches attached to the Japanese Army. I wanted a front to be given to our men and this was ultimately given.

"We have also learnt our defects. Transport and supply were defective owing to the difficult terrain. We had no front-line propaganda. Though we had prepared personnel for this, we could not use it owing to lack of transport. Henceforth each unit of the I.N.A. will have a propaganda unit attached to it. We wanted loud-speakers, but the Japanese failed to supply us. We are now making our own."

The Cabinet decided then unanimously to continue the struggle till our Motherland was completely independent. In order to achieve this it was considered essential to mobilize all our resources, be as little dependent upon the Japanese as possible and co-ordinate all our activities. To accomplish these, Netaji decided to form a small 'War Council' which was made the sole co-ordinating authority for all war efforts. It was to be an all-out effort for expedition and efficiency, and I was appointed the first Secretary of the War Council. Later on, as I had to take up the work of the Foreign Office, Maj.-Gen. M. Z. Kiani was appointed Secretary. The Council consisted of:

1. Netaji
2. Maj.-Gen. Bhonsle
3. Maj.-Gen. M. Z. Kiani
4. Col. Aziz Ahmed
5. Col. Ehsan Qadir
6. Col. Habibur Rahman
7. Col. Gulzara Singh
8. Paramananda
9. N. Raghavan
10. Col. I. J. Kiani
11. Col. Shah Nawaz Khan
12. The author.

Parts of the 2nd Division had arrived from Malaya, but unfortunately the ship carrying a large part of the ammunition, guns and armoured cars, sank in the mouth of the Irawaddy as a result of enemy aerial bombing.

It was decided to celebrate the Azad Hind Day and the Provisional Government Day in a befitting manner, so it was decided to hold ceremonial parades and rallies from the 16th to the 22nd October. The Week was suitably celebrated, but yet another miraculous thing happened on the 18th October in Rangoon. Netaji was reviewing the troops on the parade ground at Mingaladon in the morning. A big raised platform was built on which he stood and took the salute as the troops marched past. High-ranking

military officers were standing behind him on the platform, on either side of which a huge Tricolour Flag was flying. These were so large that they were distinctly seen from a long distance. Japanese aeroplanes were flying overhead as a precautionary measure against enemy air raids. Nearly 4,000 troops were on parade. They were marching past in beautiful form in front of Netaji. Suddenly a huge enemy fighter-bomber appeared over the parade ground about a hundred yards behind the place where Netaji was standing and about fifty feet above the ground. Nobody understood how the plane had suddenly materialised. The whole parade was in full view of the plane. The pilot fired a few shots from his machinegun right in front of him on the cars that were parked ahead of him, but not a single machinegun was fired or grenades thrown towards the left side of the plane where the troops were marching past. Officers, including myself, asked Netaji to come down and take shelter but he refused point-blank and stood at his post firm and determined. He said later on, "I had made up my mind that if I had to die, I would rather like to die at this position than be caught while trying to take shelter." Meanwhile, most of the civilian guests, and even some of the Japanese officers, had gone away to take shelter in trenches. However, the aeroplane passed without causing any appreciable damage. Evidently the anti-aircraft batteries of the Japanese had tried to hit this plane without success. They fired one shell very low, it missed the plane but hit one of our men as they were marching past on the head and killed him instantaneously. The man fell down, but not one of his comrades flinched or broke his step. They marched on steadily past the saluting post.

All of a sudden yet another enemy plane appeared at a distance flying very low and in front of Netaji. This time we pressed Netaji and induced him to come down from the platform and take shelter ; but before doing so he issued orders for the dispersal of the men who were on parade. Hardly had the troops dispersed and Netaji taken shelter

in a manhole when terrific machinegunning and throwing of hand granades took place over the area where they had taken shelter. Nothing happened in the empty parade ground. Evidently the enemy had detected the movements of our men, but inspite of the terrific bombardment, by God's grace not a single man was hurt. After the raid was over, everyone went back home cheerful and none the worse for the experience.

Netaji, through the newly established Ministry of Supplies and the Military of Transport, arranged to provide such transport and supplies as were available to meet the requirements of the Azad Hind Fauj. Cars were purchased at fabulous prices. Even in March, 1944, a Talbot Sunbeam car purchased for my use cost twenty thousand rupees, but now (October, 1944) even a Chevrolet car could not be purchased for less than one lakh and twenty thousand rupees. Lorries were practically unobtainable. So it was decided to arrange for bullock cart transport and establish depots at suitable distances along the line of communication. Supplies of different kinds were still available, but were very costly. Under the direction of Paramanand Sahib, the new Minister of Supplies, supply depots were established at suitable places in co-ordination with the Azad Hind Fauj, according to their requirements. In this connection very good work was done by many Sindhi merchants who had volunteered to serve in the Azad Hind Dal. They went forward, established contacts in the villages and collected as much material as was possible. In many instances, they carried the loads themselves when suitable transport was not immediately available.

Certain problems had arisen as a result of our experience of the first round of the battle we had fought on the Indo-Burma frontier. These required amicable but clear settlement, but they could only be achieved by direct negotiation with the Japanese Government in Tokyo. So it was decided to go to Tokyo immediately. Netaji took with him Maj.-Gen. Kiani, Col. Habibur Rahman and myself. He also

wanted to take with him his Regimental Commanders, Maj.-Gen. Shah Nawaz Khan, Col. Gulzara Singh, and Col. I. J. Kiani.

We left Rangoon on the 28th October and left instructions for taking the other officers to Tokyo as soon as transport was available, but unfortunately there were a great deal of difficulties in securing suitable transport in time. As a result, the Regimental Commanders could not reach Tokyo. From Rangoon our first halt was at Bangkok which we reached in two and a half hours' time. Our next halt was at Saigon and we started from there on the following day and reached Hainan. Here we met a few prisoners of war who said that they and their comrades, who were about three hundred in number, were very keen to join the Azad Hind Fauj. Instructions were therefore left with the Japanese authorities to arrange for the transport of these men either to Bangkok or to Singapore as soon as possible. There was a big Japanese hospital close to where Netaji was staying. He donated two thousand dollars for the comfort of the patients there. The following day we started and reached Tihoku (Formosa) and on the following day we landed at the civilian aerodrome near Tokyo. At the aerodrome there was a large gathering of high-ranking Japanese civil and military officers, including Marshal Sugiyama, who was the War Minister, Mr. Momoru Shigemetsu, the Foreign Minister, and others. They were immensely pleased to see Netaji again, and a very cordial reception was given. As Netaji had arrived as a State guest, we were all taken at once to the Guest House (Gaimusho) of the Foreign Office. We stayed there for ten days, which is the usual official period. On the very first day, Netaji called at the Premier's residence in the morning. We also called later at the Foreign Office, the War Office, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Navy. Subsequently, a State Dinner was given by the Premier, Gen. Koiso, who welcomed Netaji in glowing terms and reaffirmed Japan's pledge to help the Independence Movement

to her utmost capacity for the liberation of India. He also re-affirmed solemnly the pledge that Japan had given before (through Gen. Hideki Tojo) that Japan had no territorial, economic, or military ambitions in India and she did not want any special privileges in return for the help she was giving. Japan owed a debt to India for her culture and religion which she received through China and Korea. At this dinner there was a remarkable gathering which included the former Prime Ministers Tojo, Hirota and other distinguished guests. Netaji gave a suitable reply and re-affirmed his determination to continue the fight until India regained complete freedom from any kind of domination. Another dinner was given by the Foreign Minister Momoru Shigemetsu. Here also very cordial feelings were exchanged. The Foreign Minister highly eulogised Netaji's struggle for the independence of his Motherland and his determined opposition to any kind of domination. Prof. Toyama, the famous leader of the Black Dragon Society of Japan who had given protection to Rash Behari Bose in the early days of his exile in Japan, had died two days before our arrival in Tokyo. His deputy came and paid his respects to Netaji. Many other people also came to see him. We met the famous Japanese poet Noguchi during our visit. Netaji saw Baron and Lady Shibetsu who were his hosts on his earlier visit to Japan in 1943 on the occasion of the Greater East Asia Conference. Many presents were given to Netaji, including a sword from Gen. Hideki Tojo. Netaji was received in audience by the Japanese Emperor Hirohito. Several conferences were held with the Premier, Gen. Koiso, the Foreign Minister, as well as the War Office. These negotiations took a long time, and we moved out of the official Gai-musho (Guest House) and a special part of the Imperial Hotel was reserved for us. The main arrangements resulting from the conferences with the Japanese Government were :—

(1) The Japanese Government agreed to give all-out support to the Provisional Government of Free India in its

struggle for the achievement of complete independence of India.

(2) The Provisional Government of Free India would establish its own Departments of Foreign Affairs for direct dealing with all political matters with the Japanese Government, and therefore this Branch of the Hikari Kikan (Japanese Liaison Office) would be abolished so far as India was concerned.

As a natural corollary of the agreements, the Japanese Government agreed to despatch immediately several wireless sets, ammunition etc. We were very short of medicines which were not available anywhere in South-east Asia. The Japanese War Office offered to send some of these free of cost at the earliest possible moment. I took every opportunity to visit important Japanese institutions and organisations which had greatly helped in building up the nation. I specially visited the No. 1 Military Hospital at Tokyo which was one of the best that I have seen in any part of the world. The plastic surgery that was being done was excellent. The Professor-in-charge of the Pathology Department showed me at that time the growth of Penicilin which he had cultured in a flask. The Japanese had manufactured effective substitutes for Atebrin and Plasmochin. I also saw some educational institutions and visited the Department of Education, where they explained to me the organisation and methodology followed by the Department. I visited some schools where I found the children well nourished and well disciplined. The school rooms were well ventilated. I enquired specially about the maintenance of health of the children attending the schools, particularly in view of the fact that on account of the war conditions food was strictly rationed. I found that in order to facilitate growth and development the children were given half a teaspoonful of dry powdered silkworm which could be had in abundance in the country. It was found to be very helpful as it contained a large percentage of vitamin B<sub>2</sub>. I also visited the Department of Commerce and Agriculture



which was responsible for collection, storage and distribution of articles of food and clothing and other material that were rationed. The system they had developed for the rationing of articles was excellent, as was proved by looking at the people in general and particularly at the women and children in Japan. There was no under-nourishment. The children were plump and so were the women. I made special enquiries from the Indian residents and they confirmed that rationing was very efficient and adequate. They were particularly grateful as the Japanese Government had made special allowance for a larger quantity of food to the Indians because of their bigger build than the Japanese, as they had done in the case of Europeans. It was evident that the Japanese, although they were proud of being Asiatic and wanted to hold the honour and prestige of the Asiatics in every field, yet they were not unkind or inconsiderate towards the Europeans who were residing in their own realm as peaceful citizens. I also visited the Primary military and aeronautical schools. I was greatly impressed by the amount of attention that was being paid to the physical training of the adolescents. *Kendo* (Lathi play), in which a face mask and cotton pads on the chest and the back were used, was a very popular game. In this there were real attacks and defence ; there was no question of half-heartedness in the display. So also was wrestling. I also saw the children in their Aeronautical School practising with gliders for their primary training. They were all doing by themselves under the guidance of an instructor. On account of our having to attend different conferences and other engagements, unfortunately I could not see the Naval School, but we visited the Military Academy where our cadets selected for the purpose were going to be admitted. It was located in a beautiful place with a magnificent panorama in front of it. On account of the War it had to be tremendously expanded. Appointments were simple but very useful and to the point. Arrangements for training were excellent and a very strict

discipline was maintained. Already cadets from the Philippines, Siam and Burma were attending the Academy. Netaji visited the Preparatory School in which the cadets selected by him from Malaya, Burma and other places were under training. The relationship between future cadets and their teachers was very cordial. The teachers were very enthusiastic about their pupils who were living quite happily in the single room which had been provided for each of them. Special arrangements had been made for their food which was naturally different from that of the Japanese, but under the efficient management of the able Chairman of the Indian Independence League, Rama Murthy, no particular difficulty was found in meeting the requirements of the children who were full of spirits and were eagerly looking forward to passing their examination for admission into the Military Academy and Air Force Training School. Netaji visited the places three times. He partook with them of the dinner served to them, and gave each of them a few minutes for interviews. The cadets were greatly delighted to see Netaji again in their present surroundings. Myself, Gen. Kiani and Col. Habibur Rahman paid visits to Yokohama and I myself also went to meet members of the Indian Independence League in Kobe where people from Osaka had also come.

After a very busy time in Japan on the 30th November. We first stopped at Shanghai where a public reception was given to Netaji by the members of the Indian Independence League and the Indian community, which was attended by the Mayor of Shanghai and other Chinese officials and Japanese military authorities. Netaji held a review of the volunteers of the Azad Hind Fauj. He stood at the balcony of a prominent building on 'The Bund' and took the salute. The march past by the volunteers was excellent. Most of the volunteers were Sikhs whose bearing, discipline, and marching order greatly impressed everyone present. The Chinese greatly loved and respected these men. We replenished our supplies of medicines by a direct deal with

the agents of Bayer & Co. and medicines and drugs worth nearly a million yen were purchased from them. These were handed over to the Japanese military authorities for onward despatch to Singapore as soon as possible. Netaji also reviewed the contingent of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment which was under training there. All of them as well as the volunteers of the Azad Hind Fauj were exceedingly keen to go to the Burma Front at the earliest possible opportunity. They wanted to come to grips with the enemy for the liberation of their Motherland. We experienced bitter cold weather in Shanghai. It was much colder than in Japan. We were told such extreme cold weather occurred in Shanghai from time to time as bitter cold winds swept down into China from the frozen areas of Siberia. We left Shanghai after a three-day halt and after touching again at Tihoku, we reached Saigon. A public meeting was held which was addressed by Netaji. He impressed upon the audience that they should consider themselves as Indians, whether they were Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs or Christians, or whether they belonged to British India or French India. When India achieved her freedom there would not be any distinctions among them. Everyone of them should exert their level best and mobilise all their resources in men, material and money for the complete independence of India. As funds were urgently needed and as the new Finance Minister N. Raghavan was not able to come, Netaji decided to leave me behind when the local leaders asked for me and promised Netaji that they would follow the principle he had laid down for the collection of funds—a fixed quota for each community.

Unfortunately, after a few days' trial I found that many of them were not at all sincere and that they started quarrelling amongst themselves. I thought it best to go down to Singapore as it was necessary to get Netaji's instructions on the policy I wanted to follow which might mean complete reversal of the policy already laid down. I accordingly went down to Singapore, but as important developments

were taking place in Burma where the enemy had progressed, particularly from north and west, it was found necessary that we should proceed to Burma immediately. We reached Rangoon by the end of November.

The enemy forces had occupied Katha and Mogok and were nearing Lashio on the extreme side. On the west they were nearing the Chindwin river from whose east bank our troops had been withdrawn. They had taken up defence positions on the southern bank of the Irawaddy on the loop below Sagaing. The hospital at Monywa was closed and transferred to Ziawadi where it opened up again. The hospitals at Maymyo were being evacuated and Mandalay had been fortified for a prolonged defence.

As funds were urgently needed, Netaji sent me to Bangkok where I arrived about the second week of January, 1945. I set to work immediately and started the collections, following the principles with slight variations for local purposes as laid down by the Board of Management for raising funds for the Provisional Government of Free India. We made an intensive drive for the collection. The 23rd of January was approaching and it was decided in Rangoon, against the wishes of Netaji, to weigh him against gold. We calculated that if we could collect thirty million *tikals* it would be equivalent to the gold which would balance Netaji's weight. The people responded enthusiastically when the proposal was made to them. On the 23rd January we completed our collection of the required amount and wired to Netaji offering our humble contribution equivalent to the gold. Later on, more than double that quantity was collected. The Government of Siam, whose Premier now was Maj. Khuong Aphoyvongse, invited Netaji to pay a State visit to the capital. Accordingly, preparations were made to give Netaji a rousing reception both by the Government of Siam as well as by the Indian community.

On the 5th February, 1945, I received a telegram from Netaji appointing me Minister for Foreign Affairs. He had already promoted me to the rank of Major-General along

with some other officers—Cols. Bhonsle, Kiani and Loganadan. He also promoted Lt.-Col. Shah Nawaz, Gulzara Singh, Habibur Rahman, Aziz Ahmed, G. R. Nagar, and S. A. Alagoppan, to be full Colonels. Netaji arrived with S. A. Iyer and Col. Habibur Rahman and landed at the Bangkok aerodrome. He was received there by the Prime Minister Maj. K. Aphoyvongse, the Foreign Minister Mr. Sena, and other high-ranking officers. A Guard of Honour by the Siamese Infantry 'presented arms' to him at the aerodrome. As a State guest he was taken to a palace specially meant for State guests where he stayed for five days. He paid a courtesy call to the Regent of the minor King in the Imperial Palace, which was suitably returned in due course. A State dinner was given by the Prime Minister which was followed by an exhibition of classical Siamese dance. The dances executed by talented celebrities were very charming. But the dresses and the poses in the Brahmanical Dance were undoubtedly the most exquisite exhibited there. A big public reception was given by the Indian community in the Silpakaran Hall, which was beautifully decorated and was packed to full capacity with a large number of people standing outside. After a round of visits and invitations, Netaji went back to Rangoon and I remained behind to continue with my work of collection of funds. Shortly after, however, Netaji sent me an urgent telegram asking me to come back to Rangoon. I reached the latter place on the 16th February, 1945. I was told that several matters were outstanding with the Burmese Government which required immediate settlement, so I had to take up Foreign Office work immediately. I established the Foreign Office in one of the houses which was previously occupied by one of the Acting Lt.-Governors of Burma. I called at the Foreign Affairs Department of the Independent Government of Burma and met Mr. Thakin Mia, Minister for Foreign Affairs. Several matters were outstanding for some time regarding the relationship between Indians and Burmans and those relating to the properties of Indians.

After discussions these were almost all amicably settled. In this matter I had the help of two of my able Deputy Secretaries, namely, Rajan and Kar. They were indefatigable and resourceful.

While I was in Bangkok in February, I heard about the arrival there of Mr. Hatchia, Japanese Minister to the Provisional Government of Free India, with his Secretary Mr. Kakitsubo. A few days later he arrived in Rangoon with his entourage. In consultation with the Japanese authorities, a programme for the presentation of his credentials and his reception had been arranged already in every detail. Mr. Hatchia came to see me on the day following his arrival. When we talked about the programme of presenting credentials, he said that he did not have any. I reported the matter immediately to Netaji. He enquired if Mr. Hatchia had any letter of authority or some document from the Government of Japan to show that he had actually been appointed as a Minister to the Provisional Government of Free India. Accordingly I made further enquiries from Mr. Hatchia, and when he replied that he had none, Netaji decided that he could not receive Mr. Hatchia as the accredited representative of the Japanese Government until he possessed the required credentials and naturally he could not be given any official recognition. This brought about a very awkward situation. Somebody had bungled in Japan. I had unofficial discussions with Mr. Hatchia on the matter and he said that there was no precedent in the history of the Japanese Government in sending an accredited representative to a Provisional Government. I replied I did not want to question the validity of his statement, which might be perfectly true, but a free and independent Government like that of Japan could establish a precedent if it wanted, and in our case it was absolutely essential that our relationship must be on a regular basis. So I suggested to Mr. Hatchia to immediately cable or send information by plane to Japan either to get proper credentials or at least have a letter of authority to

show that he was actually appointed a Minister. Communication had become very difficult between Burma and Japan, and it took some time before the documents arrived. But in the meantime disaster had already taken place in Burma, and we had to evacuate Rangoon.

*Azad Hind Fauj:*

The enemy had advanced from the north as well as from the north-west and had arrived on the west bank of the Chindwin, from where he had started to bombard heavily our positions on the east bank of that area. In addition, the enemy's air activity had increased manifold with the result that our hospital at Moray was almost destroyed. In consequence of this we had to withdraw our units of the 1st Division further south and east to Pynmana. The units of the 1st Division were concentrated at this place for regrouping. An 'X' Regiment was formed by the amalgamation of several detachments of different units of this division. Lt.-Col. (now Colonel) Thakur Singh, a very brave and experienced officer who was second in command of the 1st Regiment under Maj.-Gen. Shah Nawaz Khan, was selected for commanding this new regiment, and Col. R. M. Arshad was put in command of the remaining personnel of the 1st Division as Netaji took Maj.-Gen. M. Z. Kiani to Rangoon where he was appointed Secretary of the War Council.

Netaji had gone up the line to inspect his troops who had taken up their defence position there. The 2nd Division had already arrived and Maj.-Gen. Aziz Ahmed Khan was appointed Divisional Commander. Unfortunately he had received an injury in his neck and was laid up in bed for quite a considerable time. Troops of the 2nd Division moved up north and west. They took up positions on both banks of the Irrawaddy commencing from Meiktila, Myngyan, Nyangu, Pokoku, Pagan, Kyaukpadan, Popa, Yenangyaung, Magwe, Minbu, Tungdwingye, Thayetmyo,

up to Prome, where an Advance Base Supply Depot was established.

The enemy by a surprise crossing of the Irawaddy near Myngyan with a powerful mechanized force had brought about a complete change in the situation. The force dashed down towards Meiktilla, while Mandalay was still in the hands of the Japanese forces. Air activities had increased tremendously. Enemy planes had bombed several aerodromes in Meiktilla very heavily. It was at this juncture that Netaji had reached the village of Indaw—approximately 20 miles south of Meiktilla—with the object of going still forward and inspecting the front-line troops, when suddenly news came that the enemy was within a few miles of the place. Still Netaji insisted on going to see his troops in Popa. He was not in the least afraid of being killed if the enemy surrounded him and he had to fight a battle. But we could not afford to lose him that way. It was the ingenuity of Maj.-Gen. Shah Nawaz Khan which prevented Netaji from going to Popa ; he managed things very well. Ultimately Netaji was persuaded to return to Pyinmana which was further south on the Mandalay-Rangoon road. Netaji would have been captured by the enemy if he had not left the place immediately on foot as his car had broken down at the moment. Later on he got into another car and, after visiting Pyinmana, reached Toungoo, and after a short halt there, arrived in Rangoon safely. In the meantime Maj.-Gen. Shah Nawaz Khan evacuated all I.N.A. personnel and stores from Meiktilla to Pyinmana where he rejoined Netaji.

On arrival in Rangoon, Netaji learnt the sad news of the desertion of four senior officers of the 2nd Division. He was greatly hurt. As Maj.-Gen. Shah Nawaz Khan was commanding the 2nd Division, he gave him a free hand to select his own officers. The latter selected Majors Ram Sarup, Meher Das Sardar-e-Jang, Ajaib Singh and B. S. Rawat and left Rangoon with them at the end of the first week of March, 1945. Previous to this our troops of the



2nd Division had already come in contact with the enemy forces in several places. One engagement took place on the night of the 13/14th February on the east bank of the Irawaddy on the Pagan front. The enemy, having received considerable reinforcements, made a most determined attack. He first pounded our defensive positions with a very intensive artillery barrage and under cover of it tried to cross over in motor boats. Capt. Chandra Bhan, who was defending the sector, was well prepared. A very sanguinary battle was fought throughout the night and repeated attacks by the enemy were repulsed. At least 20 boatloads of the enemy were sunk. The next day the air forces carried out an intensive bombing and machine-gunning attack on most of our positions on the east bank of the Irawaddy. After that they started intensive artillery firing and ultimately about midday captured a Japanese post which was on our right flank opposite Pokoku and secured a foothold on the east bank of the Irawaddy on this sector, and thus were able to establish a bridgehead through which they sent across large numbers of men and material. By this time we had run short of ammunition. The enemy, having consolidated his position on the east bank, turned south and encircled one of our battalions and the rest of the troops had to fall back in that area.

After this episode, the battle scene shifted to Sade Hill, Taungzin, Kabyu, and Popa Hill which was organized as a base for our troops. Capt. Khan Mohammad distinguished himself in the attack on Sade Hill. This was one of the toughest battles fought by our troops. His party of men had to crawl at night over rocks and boulders and fight the enemy hand-to-hand. His men showed extraordinary bravery and tenacity. He successfully carried out the raid, and after dislodging the enemy from this strategic place, which dominated many of our positions, returned to his headquarters.

In the battle of Taungzin on the 17th March, 1945, Lt. Kartar Singh and 2/Lt. Gian Singh Bisht gallantly

braved a combined attack of the enemy by his tanks and infantry. They not only defended their positions, but at times took the offensive against such heavy odds, as our men had not the support of either armoured cars or guns. On one occasion 2/Lt. Gian Singh Bisht, judging the situation correctly, decided that the men should be taken out of their trenches, did so, and led a charge against this combined attack. All his men responded to his call. They shouted *Inquilab Zindabad*, *Azad Hind Zindabad* and *Netaji ki Jai*, went over the parapets and carried out the assault. They knew that they were charging into certain death, but they were not afraid at all. They were fighting for the independence of their Motherland. There was hand-to-hand fighting for two hours after which the enemy beat a retreat; but 2/Lt. Gian Singh made the supreme sacrifice in this battle for the sake of his Motherland.

To cite yet another example:—Sub-officer Abdulla Khan showed cool courage, daring and excellent tactical manœuvring when he attacked a mechanized enemy patrol near the village of Daungle. The enemy became confused and did not like the cross-fire that he was subjected to by Sub-officer Abdulla Khan, and therefore retreated. Our men captured a good booty.

Capt. Bagri on the 30th March, 1945, when he was in Kabyu, saved a Japanese company from being annihilated by an enemy force nearly ten times stronger by his cool courage and determination.

But inspite of these determined acts of bravery and self-sacrifice, our men had to be withdrawn. The situation about this time was serious and it was evident that we had lost the battle of Burma. In the east the enemy had advanced from the north and had penetrated deep into the Shan States. In the centre the enemy had occupied Meiktila and was advancing south on the Mandalay-Rangoon road. In the north-west the enemy had occupied Kyaukpadaung, Taundwingyi and Taungtha. On the west the enemy had crossed the Irawaddy at several points and

on the south-west he was advancing on Prome. In other words, with the help of vastly superior numbers in men and guns, and with the support of his mechanized forces and air support the enemy was bearing down more and more upon our forces and that of the Japanese in his effort to capture Rangoon as early as possible.

About the middle of March, 1945, the Burmese Defence Army, trained, equipped and partly officered by the Japanese, revolted. One cannot blame the Burmese for this. In their helplessness or innocence, they had allowed themselves at the start to be dominated by the Japanese military officers. But the Japanese had not treated them the way they should have done. The country, too, was suffering acutely from inflation, want of consumer goods and lack of accommodation. There was a general unrest. At that time the Japanese failed to re-equip our troops with rifles and automatics on the plea of shortage but within four days of their issuing arms and munitions to the Burmese Defence Army, the latter disappeared after crossing the Irawaddy on the west and proceeding south in the Delta. Maj.-Gen. Aung San, who had revolted against the British, now revolted against the Japanese. This put an end to Japanese control of the Burmese Defence Army, which received every support from the people and the first thing they did was to kill all the Japanese officers attached to them. Our relationship with the Burmese Defence Army, however, remained quite friendly. They never attacked us and we never attacked them. The Japanese once asked us to fight against them but we firmly refused. The Burmese Defence Army helped our troops to get articles of food and transport from the villages when the Japanese were practically getting nothing. Then the Burmese Defence Army took to guerilla warfare against the Japanese and harrassed them greatly. It was due to their activities that the supply system of the Japanese broke down completely, which led to the rapid collapse of the Japanese forces after they had lost Meiktila. They had told Netaji



Maj. Gen. J. K. Bhonsla.



Lt. Col. Burhanuddin.



Col. G. S. Dhillon.



Col. P. K. Sahgal.



that they would make a stand first at Pynmana and then again at Toungoo. But they could do nothing.

Our troops fought battles at Seitkin and Leggy but had to withdraw ultimately. 2/Lt. Kanwal Singh and Havildar Abdul Mannan showed remarkable courage and gallantry in these actions and it was largely due to them that our forces successfully beat back repeated enemy attacks. Col. P. Sehgal was in command of the troops in these areas at the time and as our forces were becoming encircled he was given orders on the 4th April to withdraw to Popa, where Col. G. S. Dhillon also arrived. On account of the worsening situation our forces had to withdraw from Popa on the 10th April and proceed further south and south-west. It was during this withdrawal that Capt. Bagri and his party of 100 men made the immortal charge against British tanks and armoured cars. When they found themselves encircled, they preferred a glorious death in the field to surrender to the enemy. Our men fought bravely, whether they belonged to the so-called martial or non-martial races. That this distinction was completely false was repeatedly proved in this campaign. A large number of our troops—nearly thirty thousand—were civilian volunteers from Malaya who were largely from South India. They fought tenaciously with extraordinary bloodthirstiness in battle which some soldiers develop when a hard battle is fought hand-to-hand and the only thing that matters then is the wounding and killing of as many of the enemy as possible.

During the withdrawal, part of our forces under Maj.-Gen. Shah Nawaz Khan went across the Irawaddy to the western bank in order to avoid encirclement by the enemy mechanized forces. But after proceeding further south, they recrossed to the eastern bank. Our forces from the Prome area also withdrew towards the east and an effort was made to cross the Pegu Yomas and proceed towards Moulmein as the Japanese troops were trying to do. But the majority of our troops did not succeed in doing so as

the enemy was already astride the Mandalay-Rangoon road. Only some small groups managed to infiltrate through and one of these was under Maj. Gupta, who skilfully evaded enemy encirclement and reached Moulmein by forced marches.

Our troops from the southern Shan States and from Pyinmana tried to proceed to Moulmein. Those from the latter place succeeded to a large extent under the command of Col. Thakur Singh and Lt.-Col. Pritam Singh. They crossed the Sittang river at different places and reached Moulmein. But those from Kalaw and Taungyi, a large part of whom were sick and weak, fell into the hands of the enemy. It was in Kalaw that Yellappa, Minister of Transport, was badly wounded in his legs by bomb splinters, as a result of which he died. Maj. (now Lt.-Col.) Lakshmi had been sent by Netaji to the hospital at Kalaw to attend the medical cases there. She along with some of the troops was captured by the British while on her way down south through the hilly country.

---

## CHAPTER XIII

### FIRST ROUND LOST

When the condition became serious and our troops were retreating, it was considered necessary to send the contingent of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment away from Rangoon. The matter had to be carefully handled so that on the hand the members should not take it amiss that they were being deprived of the opportunity of continuing the struggle and remaining to the last, and on the other hand there might not arise any panic amongst the Indian population because of this early evacuation. So Netaji decided that every member who had come from Mandalay or Bangkok or other parts of South-east Asia should be given two months' leave with full pay and sent away. At first the members did not like the idea as they said they did not want any leave and that they did not want to go back to their homes. They had left their homes with the determination that either they should enter a free India or die in the struggle for the achievement of that freedom. However, with tactful handling, Netaji persuaded them to leave. The first batch left about the middle of March. On the way they were heavily fired at while they were going by train and two of them were killed. There was no panic or bitterness against the Burmese bandits who had fired at them. They reached Malaya without any further incidents. Later on, those who belonged to Burma were similarly sent away to their homes, and the last contingent accompanied Netaji later on.

When it became evident that it was not possible to put up further resistance against the enemy, and that the Japanese had decided to evacuate Rangoon, a definite decision had to be taken. A Cabinet meeting was called by Netaji and a free and frank discussion took place. Netaji said that he had made up his mind to stay and defend Rangoon to the



last, and that if he had to die he would rather die fighting in Rangoon than leave the place. This was unanimously opposed by the members of the Cabinet and he had to yield. The Cabinet was of the opinion, with which Netaji agreed, that we should not give up the struggle yet. There was still the 3rd Division in Malaya, well-trained and organized under the command of Col. G. R. Nagar, and there was still the possibility of recruiting a large number of Indians if the Japanese could supply arms. We should, therefore, consider the matter of re-organising the Army again in Siam and take whatever measures were necessary for this purpose. Even if it came to the worst, Netaji with a number of picked officers and at least one full regiment should go into China and, if the Japanese were defeated, try to contact the Chinese and the Russians. Netaji called for volunteers to stay in Rangoon to be in charge of the troops. I said that he should leave the older men in Rangoon while he should save as many of the younger officers and men as possible. Accordingly myself, Iyer, and Maj.-Gen. Loganadan volunteered to stay behind. Netaji selected Maj.-Gen. Loganadan for this. He was the oldest of us all. He was put in charge of the troops and Col. Arshad was made his Chief of Staff. Dispositions of the troops were all made out, supplies were provided and sufficient funds were provided for them. As there were sufficient funds in the Azad Hind Bank, Bhaduri Sahib, the Secretary of the Bank who offered to stay behind, was authorised to provide the troops with the money they required. Maj.-Gen. Loganadan was given full discretion in the use of his troops. He was authorised to give protection to the Indians and the Burmans if asked to.

Before Netaji left Rangoon, he issued three messages, (i) to the Burmese people thanking them and their Government for the help and co-operation they had extended to him and to the Provisional Government of Free India; (ii) to his fellow Indians residing in Burma and to his Burmese friends. Then he addressed as follows:

"To my Indian and Burmese friends in Burma! Brothers and sisters! I am leaving Burma with a very heavy heart. We have lost the first round of our fight for independence. But we have lost only the first round. There are many more rounds to be fought. In spite of our losing the first round, I see no reason for losing heart. You, my countrymen in Burma, have done your duty to your Motherland in a way that has evoked the admiration of the world. You have given liberally your men, money and material. You set the first example of total mobilisation. But the odds against us were overwhelming and we have temporarily lost the battle in Burma. The spirit of selfless sacrifice which you have shown, particularly since I shifted my headquarters to Burma, is something that I shall never forget so long as I live.

"I have the fullest confidence that that spirit can never be crushed. For the sake of India's freedom, I beseech you to keep up that spirit, I beseech you to hold your head erect, and wait for that blessed day when once again you will have an opportunity of waging the War for India's independence. When the history of India's Last War of Independence comes to be written, Indians in Burma will have an honourable place in that history.

"I do not leave Burma of my own free will. I would have preferred to stay on here and share with you the sorrow of temporary defeat. But on the pressing advice of my Ministers and high-ranking officers, I have to leave Burma in order to continue the struggle for India's liberation. Being a born optimist, my unshakable faith in India's early emancipation remains unimpaired and I appeal to you to cherish the same optimism. I have always said that the darkest hour precedes the dawn. We are now passing through the darkest hour, therefore the dawn is not far off. *India shall be free.*

"I cannot conclude this message without publicly acknowledging once again my heartfelt gratitude to the Government and people of Burma for all the help that I

have received at their hands in carrying on this struggle. The day will come when free India will repay that debt of gratitude in a generous manner”.

(iii) The Azad Hind Fauj he addressed as follows:—

“Brave officers and men of the Azad Hind Fauj! It is with a heavy heart that I am leaving Burma, the scene of the many heroic battle that you have fought since February, 1944, and are still fighting. In Imphal and Burma we have lost the first round in our fight for independence. But it is only the first round. We have many more rounds to fight. I am a born optimist and I shall not admit defeat under any circumstances. Your brave deeds in the battles against the enemy on the plains of Imphal, the hills and jungles of Arakan and the outfield area and other localities in Burma, will live in the history of our struggle for independence for all time.

“Comrades! At this critical hour I have only one word of command to give you, and that is that if you have to go down temporarily, then go down as heroes; go down upholding the highest code of honour and discipline. The future generation of Indians who will be born, not as slaves but as free men, because of your colossal sacrifice, will bless your names and proudly proclaim to the world that you, their forbears, fought and lost the battle in Manipur, Assam, and Burma, but that through temporary failure you paved the way to ultimate success and glory.

“My unshakable faith in India's liberation remains unimpaired. I am leaving in your safe hand your National Tricolours and our national honour, and the best traditions of Indian warriors. I have no doubt whatsoever that you, the vanguard of India's Army of Liberation, will sacrifice everything, even life itself, to uphold India's national honour so that your comrades who will continue the fight elsewhere may have before them your shining example to inspire them for all time.

“If I had my own way, I would have preferred to stay with you in adversity and shared with you the sorrow of

temporary defeat. But on the advice of my Ministers and high-ranking officers, I have to leave Burma in order to continue the struggle for emancipation. Knowing my countrymen in East Asia and inside India, I can assure you that they will continue the fight under all circumstances and that all your suffering and sacrifices will not be in vain. So far as I am concerned, I shall steadfastly adhere to the pledge that I took on the 21st October, 1943, to do all in my power to serve the interests of 38 crores of my countrymen and fight for their liberation. I appeal to you, in conclusion, to cherish the same optimism as myself and to believe, like myself, that the darkest hour always precedes the dawn. India shall be free and before long.

"May God bless you.

*"Inquilab Zindabad! Azad Hind Zindabad! Jai Hind!"*

It was decided then that Netaji along with as many members of his staff as possible should evacuate Rangoon. It was also decided at first to evacuate 5,000 of the troops, but it was found impossible to do so because of lack of transport and supplies of food *en route*. The only route that could be followed was to go to Moulmein *via* Sittang and thence to make way ultimately to Bangkok. Other possible methods of evacuation by boats and launches were considered but were found impracticable, so it was for this reason that only a limited number of troops could be evacuated. A number of picked men, about 500 strong, under Maj. Surajmal were then chosen and asked to proceed on foot. They marched magnificently and within two days reached Pegu, a distance of 50 miles and, crossing over the Sittang river at Sittang, ultimately reached Moulmein. Similarly, about forty picked officers and men of the Azad Hind Dal and Indian Independence League were selected for evacuation. Originally all men of the Azad Hind Dal and those of the League who wanted to evacuate were thought of, but considering the difficulty of transport and particularly of rations on the way, this was given up. These men marched along and reached Moulmein in due course.

Later on, when Dr. Ba Maw and his Cabinet also left Rangoon, the Provisional Government of Burma got in touch with Maj.-Gen. Loganadan for help in maintaining law and order until the British came and took over the town. Col. Arshad made all necessary arrangements and subsequently it was reported that there was no looting, murder or arson between the period of our evacuation and the recapture of Rangoon by the British. It was a wholly different picture from what had happened when the British were defeated and had to evacuate Rangoon in May, 1942, when the Indians were massacred, their property looted and their houses burnt. The Government of Burma were in need of funds, and as there was sufficient money in the Azad Hind Bank in Rangoon, a sum of five lakhs of rupees were donated to the Provisional Government of Burma. Rangoon was finally captured by the British on the 29th April, 1945, but the Japanese continued to put up a very heroic fight farther north in the Pegu Yomas and thus obstructed the Allied forces from pushing towards the Sittang-Moulmein Railway. Maj.-Gen. Loganadan surrendered on that date with the forces under his command.

Netaji and his staff reached Waw in the evening of the 25th. We saw on the way the blowing up of a whole train-load of ammunition due to enemy air action. For three hours we did not know when a bomb or a shell would hit us. The place where Netaji remained during the night, we came to know subsequently, was not more than two miles from the enemy advance columns; but luckily the enemy did not know anything about his presence. The crossing of a small stream at Waw had become very difficult as it had become a bottleneck and hundreds of cars, trucks, and other motor vehicles had accumulated there. It was a miracle that the enemy had not been able to spot this place earlier. However, we crossed over to the other side of the river and stayed the day there, but that morning enemy planes came and heavily machine-gunned the place and dropped a few bombs at the crossing of the river which we had passed the

previous night. We reached Sittang early in the following morning, stayed there during the day and crossed the river in the evening. During our stay on the west bank of Sittang, some firing took place and an alarm was raised that the Burmese were attacking, but it did not materialize. We crossed the Sittang river early in the morning. We went and rested in a Poongi Khyaung which was well wooded near the top of a hill. This was a very eventful day. Enemy planes came about the middle of the day and ploughed up this area with machineguns, grenades and bombs. As soon as one flight of planes had raided the place from the east and gone towards the west, another flight came from the north and, after ploughing up the area, flew towards the south. This criss-cross raiding was one of the most awful experiences I have ever had. Except for some shelters which were cut deep in the hillside, the other shelters were open and comparatively shallow. Netaji and myself occupied a place below the raised floor of one of the huts. He would not go into shelter. The roof of the hut and its sides were pierced by many machinegun bullets. I again asked him to move away from this place into the shelter, but he would not listen. Then a rocket was thrown by a plane which fell very near us, ploughed up the ground and made a tremendous crack. Some of its splinters fell close to us. He then asked me to go away from the place and get under shelter. I replied, "I refuse to leave you and I will not go into a shelter unless you go ahead." At this he relented and went into one of the hillside shelters which was close by and full of people. As soon as we had left the place the firing was intensified and we could feel that there was a regular rain of bullets and hand-grenades all over the place. It was a miracle that none was hit excepting a single individual and this inspite of the fact that in one place a couple of members of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment had left their shelter and run, with their sarees flowing, to another place. This should never have been done at the time. But later on we found that they had been compelled to do this as

the shelter they had first occupied was full of people and the protection insufficient. The only person who was hit was one of my A.D.C.s—Lt. Nazir Ahmed Khan who unwittingly did not leave his hut and was lying down there along with two other persons. He was hit by a large machinegun bullet and received a compound communitated fracture of his left thigh bone. He was then brought to one of the shelters. Maj. Menon, myself, and one of the members of the Nursing Section of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment, helped to dress his wounds and put up a long sling. His bleeding was stopped and he was putting up with his injury very bravely and patiently.

Towards the afternoon some of our men brought in a Japanese officer on an improvised stretcher. He had been badly wounded and was almost in his last stages, being slashed up by a sword and with a deep wound over his neck. He had bled protusely. His face was ashen white. This officer had come and paid his respect to Netaji in the morning. He spoke English clearly but with a definite American accent. His face, too, was not typically Japanese. He was born and educated in America. After seeing Netaji he had come across some of our men in the jungle. As he did not know Hindusthani he had spoken to them in English, and the men had mistaken him for an enemy officer. Their suspicion was further intensified as he was keeping one of his hands on his revolver, and therefore one of our men attacked him with his sword. This was a very unfortunate incident, but full credit must be given to the officer as he expressed no rancour or disappointment although he knew he was going to die. On the contrary, before he died, he expressed the desire that we should forget the incidence.

As the cars, excepting that of Netaji, and lorries had not crossed over, the next stage of the journey had to be made on foot. As I myself was not feeling well, I was left behind to look after Lt. Nazir Ahmed Khan and to make suitable arrangements for him and also to arrange for the burial of the Japanese officer. Netaji refused go in his car

and marched along with his troops. Early next morning the Japanese officer was buried in a suitable spot. We discovered that the place was extremely dangerous from the point of view of enemy air activity as we noticed several huge fresh craters within a few yards from the place but all on one side. I therefore decided to remove Lt. Nazir Ahmed Khan to a place about three furlongs further away down the valley to a shelter which had been deeply cut into the hill side. I made enquiries about the proximity of any hospital, but could not get any information. So I left my orderly and Lt. Prannath—the other A.D.C.—in charge of Lt. Nazir Ahmed Khan and asked them to get in touch with the Chairman of the local Independence League so that he could be handed over to a British medical officer when he arrived. A group of men of the Anti-Aircraft Battery which was located not very far away remained behind. During the day a small truck had arrived, and I along with other persons who were not able to march proceeded towards Kyauktaw. As we were proceeding at night suddenly the drone of enemy planes were heard. We immediately put the truck under cover of a tree and dispersed into the jungle nearby. In the meanwhile the Company of Maj. Surajmal also arrived. Three enemy planes passed over us, and although there was brilliant moonlight they did not discover our presence. We continued our journey and ultimately caught up with Netaji's column early next morning. After a few hours I was very happy to see Lt. Prannath bringing up Lt. Nazir Ahmed in a truck; he was lying on a stretcher. During the day enemy planes came down for reconnoitring the area, but failed to locate us and went away without causing any damage. The next evening, as we started again, a lot of firing took place. This was an attack by Burmese soldiers on the Japanese column which was passing along the road by which we were going. Luckily no one was hit. Nothing further happened of any consequence during our retreat until we reached Moulmein on the eastern bank of the Salween river. I had



come ahead of Netaji and he was just a day's march behind.

As soon as we reached Moulmein, we were allotted quarters not far off from the harbour. We had been there hardly two hours when terrific enemy aerial bombardment took place. Several bullets and splinters pierced the house in which we were staying. Maj.-Gen. Bhonsle had also arrived at the place by that time. We immediately decided to evacuate the buildings and look for a more sheltered area. This we found further east. Netaji arrived there in due course on the following day. We were very anxious about him because of the intense enemy air activity that was taking place over the Salween river between Martaban and Moulmein; but it was Netaji's indomitable determination and courage and his good luck that helped him to cross the Moulmein river in daylight and reach the sheltered place without any incident. We were indeed greatly relieved when he arrived safely. We halted at Moulmein for two days to complete the arrangements for proceeding further. We received information that although the Burma-Siam Railway was working, there were long stretches of the line which had been put out of action. Several bridges had been destroyed and we must be prepared to march for distances varying from five to fifteen miles in some of these places. I eagerly wanted to take along with me Lt. Nazir Ahmed Khan, but in the circumstances this was impossible. I had, therefore, with great reluctance and a heavy heart to leave him behind in the Missionary Hospital which had been taken over for military purposes by the Japanese authorities. I left sufficient funds with him. He was looking cheerful and was not in the least depressed. Still I felt very deeply because I was compelled to leave him behind. Both he and Prannath were excellent helping hands and comrades. They were cheerful and resourceful. Between themselves they had developed a very close tie, and behaved towards each other just like brothers. After a number of troops had departed, I started with a contingent of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment by train.

Netaji remained behind and was to come by car later on. During his stay there was an appeal from the Indian population for leaving behind some troops of the Azad Hind Fauj in order to protect them against robbery and murder. Netaji acceded to their request and left a sufficient number of troops behind for their protection. We went by train for about thirty miles when we had to detrain and march on on foot for about ten miles, after which we entrained again. We were warned that there would be two more gaps farther ahead where the railway lines had been broken and the bridges under repair. The train always moved by night, and by day was put in sidings in the jungle. We passed through primeval forests and mountains. We stayed during the day in important places such as Prankashi, and ultimately reached Bangkok towards the end of May. Within a few days Netaji and his staff also arrived.

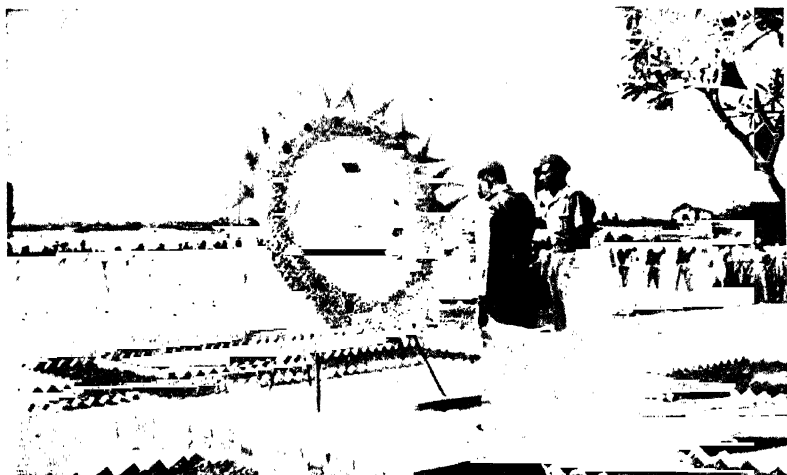
*Siam:*

Headquarters of the Provisional Government of Free India and the Supreme Command of the Azad Hind Fauj and the Indian Independence League, were established in different buildings in Bangkok which was a few miles outside Bangkok proper. Cabinet meetings were held and several decisions were arrived at. The different Departments started functioning, and arrangements were made for receiving and bringing back contingents of the Azad Hind Fauj and the Azad Hind Dal who came marching across the Burma-Siamese frontier. It was considered that if conditions were favourable, the second line of defence would be taken up in Siam, and for this purpose, the 3rd Division, which was armed, and two other divisions, which were unarmed, would be brought to Siam. But on special request from the Japanese military authorities, these were not moved. The biggest difficulty was that of transportation. These troops, although they remained in Malaya, would not be utilized for the purpose of fighting unless absolutely necessary. They would help the Japanese in the prepara-

tion of defence positions, such as putting up breastworks and walls, digging trenches and tunnels in the hill-sides etc. It was further decided that if the worse came to the worst, the tentative proposals arrived in Rangoon that in the event of Japanese defeat in South-east Asia, at least a brigade of troops would move into China and further beyond, if necessary, would be carried out. For this purpose, sufficient funds had to be collected and the troops had to be re-equipped. Gradually the Rani of Jhansi Regiment was further demobilised, but it was a very painful task, as some of the members strongly urged that they should be allowed to remain with us. They said that they had left their homes and did not want to go back. They wanted to continue the struggle as long as we decided to do so, and were prepared to share cheerfully all hardships and sufferings with us. Lt. Janki Thewar particularly was insistent on coming with us. However, with a great deal of persuasion and tact, Netaji induced them to return to their homes. Funds were needed to meet the expenses of the preparations that were decided upon. Raghaban, Finance Minister, had not been able to go to Saigon yet, so Netaji again detailed me to go to Saigon for the collection of funds. So S. A. Iyer and myself left Bangkok by plane on the 6th June, 1945. It was still dark when I left the bungalow for the aerodrome. Netaji came out of his room and gave me some instructions. I did not realise at that time that it would be my last meeting with our beloved Netaji.

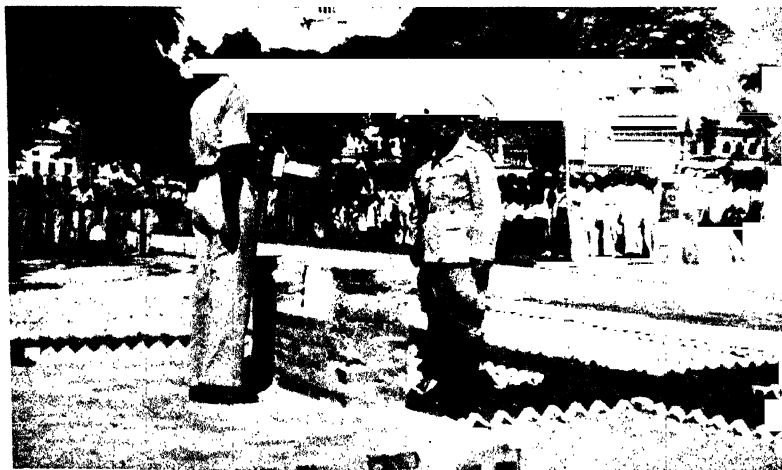
Netaji left Bangkok in the second week of June on a tour of inspection of the 3rd Division in Malaya. Col. G. R. Nagar was then the Divisional Commander. From June to August Netaji made extensive tours in Malaya and inspected the different units of the Azad Hind Fauj. During the Netaji Week celebration in Singapore we laid the foundation stone of the War Memorial to the "Shaheeds" of the Azad Hind Fauj. This sacred and beautiful memorial was completed by August. But it is a matter of the greatest shame





Netaji saluting after laying wreaths on Shaheed Memorial.  
Foundation Stone of the Memorial seen in front.

Singapore, July, '45.



Shaheed Memorial under construction.

Netaji and Col. Habibur Rahman seen paying homage at the Memorial.  
Singapore, Aug., '45.

that the British destroyed it with dynamite as soon as they reoccupied Singapore after the surrender of the Japanese. And yet the British claim to be a civilized nation and profess to follow the principles of Christianity. They were terribly afraid that the Indian soldiers of the British Indian Army might not remain loyal for long if they saw this sacred memorial to those who had sacrificed their lives for the liberation of their Motherland. They realised that this memorial would at once blast away the false propaganda they had spread in the minds of the Indian soldiers of their Armed Forces. But the sacred memories of the 'Shaheeds' could not be so easily eliminated. Although after the surrender the members of the Azad Hind Fauj were in captivity, the civilians of Singapore—Indians, Chinese and Malays—placed a fresh wreath every day over the heap of bricks and mortar remaining at the place where the memorial was. The British tried to stop this and inflicted severe punishment on those who came to place the wreaths. But they did not succeed. A wonderful thing that happened was that the destruction of the memorial drew the Chinese community closer to the Indians and the former combined with the latter and greatly helped them in keeping up the memorial.

The news of Lord Wavell's offer for the reconstruction of his Executive Council reached Netaji in Singapore. He immediately took up this challenge—as it was nothing else—to India's fortitude, courage and political sagacity. He carried on war over the radio day after day, warning and imploring the leaders and his countrymen to be careful and not to put their feet in the snare set up by British imperialism. The Viceroy wanted to stampede the people into acceptance of his proposals.

Netaji broadcast from Singapore on 18th June, 1945, as follows:—

"Sisters and brothers! I listened with great attention to the speech which the Viceroy of India, Lord Wavell, broadcast on June 14 from New Delhi conveying the offer

of the British Government to India. That was the offer to bring which Lord Wavell made a long pilgrimage to London.

"At such a juncture it would neither be untimely nor out of place to inform my countrymen at home how Indians in East Asia have reacted to the British Government's offer. First of all we found out, as the Viceroy himself confessed, that the only motive of the British Government is to mobilise India's support in the war against Japan. The British people are war-weary and after the termination of the war in Europe they badly need rest, and as such, they want others to fight their battle while they themselves reap the fruits of victory. But the British Indian troops are war-weary and after the recent success of the Anglo-Americans in Burma, they also desire rest and relaxation. It is, therefore, vital for the British to make the Indian people pour out their money and shed their blood for the preservation of the British Empire. While the fighting was going on inside India and along the Indo-Burma border, the British could bluff the British Indian Army with the preaching that it was their duty to fight for the defence of India. The British could also bluff them later on by preaching that the Burma campaign was merely a continuation of the campaign for the defence of India. But now that the British want India's blood and money for campaigns beyond Burma and for campaigns in the Pacific, a new scheme must be found in order to obtain India's support for such campaigns. That is why the British Government has now put forward this new offer which is in reality Sir Stafford Cripps' old offer in a slightly altered garb. \* \* \* \*

"It is therefore crystal clear that any acceptance of Lord Wavell's offer will be tantamount to a voluntary shedding of precious Indian blood and draining our resources in fighting Britain's imperialistic war. But what would India gain in return? Nothing except a few jobs on the Viceroy's Executive Council.....

"Under normal circumstances there would not be even a ten to one chance for any Indian nationalist to be enamoured of the present offer, but the British are cunning politicians and they have chosen the proper psychological moment for aiming this offer at India. British politicians are hoping that the Indian people are now overawed by recent Anglo-American victories. The Indian people may, therefore, feel that we stand no chance of achieving independence during the course of the present war and might as well make the best of a bad bargain and take whatever is being offered by the British. ....

"While the present offer is the old offer of Sir Stafford Cripps appearing in a slightly altered form, there are other obnoxious features which render the offer totally unacceptable. In his speech the Viceroy has clearly indicated that he regards the Congress as one among many parties, as has been the traditional policy of the British Government. This attitude was indignantly repudiated by Mahatma Gandhi at the Round Table Conference in London in 1931 when, as representative of the Congress, he represented the Indian people. If the Congress accepts the offer now, it will repudiate once for all what it has consistently maintained, namely, that it represents the people of India and will accept what the British Government has repeatedly held, namely, that the Congress is one among many parties in India. I cannot for the slightest moment imagine how any Indian nationalist can think of accepting this offer.

"There is another mischievous feature in Lord Wavell's offer. He has ordered the release of the members of the Working Committee of the Congress, but has maintained that unless this offer is accepted, all those who participated in the rising of 1942 will have to remain in custody. There is nowhere mention in his speech that even if his offer is accepted, those who were imprisoned in the year 1939 and 1942 will be set free. It is a well-established convention in all democratic countries that a constitutional change is heralded by an amnesty for all political prisoners. In the



case of India, however, this convention has been given the go-by. The British Government has been telling us that no constitutional change can be introduced during the course of the war though we have seen that throughout the world far-reaching political changes are being carried out. Here in East Asia we have seen quite a different state of affairs. Right in the midst of the war several independent Governments have been set up and power has been handed over to the people. So you see that this British plea is completely hollow and is intended to delay and deny the Indian demand. If the British really want to set up a responsible government, they should lose no time in declaring India a self-governing nation and handing over power to the people's representatives.....

It may be that some of you are asking what is the best way for achieving the liberation of India. To that my answer is perfectly clear. First, from outside India, we shall carry on the armed struggle for our freedom to the last man and to the last round. Secondly, there are numerous friends of India abroad who advocate our cause before the bar of world opinion and in all international conferences. And, lastly, my countrymen, you, too, must be prepared to launch a revolution at the opportune moment which will spread like the wild fire of the prairies and may even be supported by the British Indian forces. Sisters and brothers, in conclusion, I appeal to you not to give up hope. I repeat that the forces that are now working inside India and outside are irresistible. There is no earthly power that can stop the Indian people from achieving their goal of freedom. With patience and determination we shall achieve our goal. The Viceroy has asked for your goodwill and co-operation. Tell him that your goodwill and co-operation have been reserved for India's struggle for liberty and for none else."

Netaji broadcast on the 19th June as follows:—

"I would beg you to consider first of all what the inevitable results of accepting Wavell's offer will be,

because the Congress leaders will have to take the responsibility of sending at least half a million Indian troops to fight Britain's imperialist war, not on the Indo-Burma border or inside Burma, but in the regions beyond Burma and in the Pacific. With all due respect I would like to ask Mahatma Gandhi, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhai Patel and other leaders whether they will take the responsibility for fighting Britain's imperialistic war in the Far East and for sacrificing half a million Indian lives for the same.

"There are definite reasons as to why the British Government is unable to obtain from Britain itself the necessary fighting men needed for the future campaigns in the Far East. First of all, the British have suffered tremendous losses during the war on many fronts over a period of five years and nine months. As a result the British people are war-weary and British troops are not willing to face another long campaign which will have to be fought under conditions much harder than in Europe. Secondly, unlike the First World War, this war has well nigh brought about the financial bankruptcy of Britain. Owing to the pressure of the colossal demand for war material British industries had to switch over almost entirely to war production. This was not the case with American industries. The result was that during the war Britain has been fast losing her pre-war markets and these markets are steadily going into the hands of American industry. If this process goes on for a long time during this war, then Britain, inspite of an Allied victory, will lose the greater portion of her pre-war foreign trade and will be economically ruined. Owing to this reason British leaders find it imperative to release their factory workers from the fighting forces and war services as soon as possible and thereby re-start peacetime industries. It is absolutely impossible for the British to do both things at the same time, namely, to fight another long campaign in the Far East and to re-start her peacetime industries.

"I have no doubt in my mind that under normal circumstances nobody belonging to the Congress would have even looked at Lord Wavell's offer. In order to give their consideration to that offer Congressmen will have to give a go-by to the fundamental principles and beliefs of the Indian National Congress. The Congress stands for complete independence. Lord Wavell's offer, as has been rightly pointed out by Mahatma Gandhi, does not even mention the word 'independence'. Secondly, the Congress stands for non-participation in and resistance to Britain's imperialist war. Thirdly, the Congress is still pledged to the 'Quit India' resolution adopted three years ago, and the national slogan for the Indian people since then has been 'Do or Die' in the fight for India's freedom. No Congressman can, consistently with his principles, therefore look at Lord Wavell's offer, not to speak of giving consideration to it. Nevertheless, the fact that so many Congressmen and leaders are actually considering the British offer is because a wave of defeatism has swept over India since the Anglo-American successes in Europe and in Burma. \* \* \* \*

"While the war in the East will be going, surprising developments are bound to take place in the domain of international affairs. Some of these developments will not be favourable to our enemies, and they will afford India further opportunities for achieving her independence. Syria and the Lebanon, inspite of the Allied victory in Europe, are fully utilizing the international situation for achieving their independence. By using England and the United States of America against French imperialism, Syria and Lebanon are setting an example to India as to how India can utilize the present international situation for winning her freedom. There is no doubt that if today Syria and Lebanon are using Britain and America against France, the day is not far off when other Arab States will use other friendly Powers against Britain. British politicians realise this, and they realise also that India will utilise the support of friendly Powers for winning her

independence, and some of these friendly Powers may come from inside the camp of the United Nations. During the course of this war India has become a live issue in world politics, and there is no doubt that in all international conferences in future the Indian issue will be raised. British politicians, therefore, want to prevent India remaining an international issue any longer, and want to convert India into a domestic issue of the British Empire. Let us not forget that the moment there is a compromise between nationalist India and Britain, India will become a domestic issue of the British Empire, and it will then be impossible for foreign Powers, such as Soviet Russia, to intervene on behalf of Indian independence.....

“If you, my countrymen at home, cannot fight British imperialism with arms, then at least keep up moral resistance to our enemy by refusing to compromise with him or fight his imperialist war. In this connection I want to make an appeal to Mahatma Gandhi, to the President and members of the Congress Working Committee, and to the millions of Congressmen and Congresswomen who stand behind them that they should not judge the international situation wrongly at this critical moment. A mistake in appraising the international situation is likely to lead to a wrong step in Indian politics. India is not beaten. We have not fallen yet. The present international situation is not unfavourable to us. On the contrary, it is much to our advantage and will become more so in the days to come. Why then should we think of a compromise now? Why then should we accept the offer which we deliberately rejected three years ago?

“I speak now as an ordinary member of the Congress, who throughout his whole public life has faithfully served the Congress and the cause of India's independence. Even if you, my sisters and brothers at home, feel that our allies will be ultimately defeated and that the Anglo-Americans will ultimately emerge triumphant, there is still no reason

to despair so far as India is concerned. No matter what happens in world politics in future, India is bound to win. India's star is definitely in the ascendent. Do not try to drag it down by a wrong step at this juncture. We have suffered long and have suffered much. Let us suffer a little more a little longer. But by all means let us stick to our guns till the end of this war. Sisters and brothers at home, don't you understand why Lord Wavell is in such a beastly hurry? Don't you understand why he has rejected the suggestion of Mr. Jinnah to postpone the Simla Conference? To us outside India, the matter is very simple and very clear. The general election in Britain takes place on July 5. The Conservative Party wants to prevent India becoming an election issue. That is why Wavell's offer was flung upon us one month before the general elections in England. Nobody knows whether the Labour Party gets a clear majority or not. It will, in any case, emerge much stronger in Parliament after July 5. The Conservative Party is afraid that if the Labour Party comes to power, and if in the meantime the Indian problem is not settled, the Labour Party is bound to make another attempt to solve the Indian question. Personally, I do not believe in bargaining, because, for me there can be no compromise over India's independence. But if you are keen on bargaining, and if you are determined to compromise over India's independence, then I beg of you not to commit yourselves before July 5.....

"I can make a clear prediction that Lord Wavell will move heaven and earth to arrive at a decision before July 5. If he succeeds, it will be a feather in the cap of the Conservative Party and will help considerably to swell the votes of the Conservative Party's candidates at the election. Moreover, if Lord Wavell succeeds in arriving at an agreement with the Congress before July 5, and if thereafter the Labour Party comes to power, then the Conservative Party will be able to prevent the Labour Cabinet from reopening the Indian issue.....

"Today, before I close, I should like to say one thing more. You are now violently condemning the Viceroy and you are criticizing him for giving an equal number of seats in the Executive Council to Caste Hindus and to Muslims. But why don't you go deeper into the question and find out the idea behind it? So far not one single Indian leader has done so, judging from the reports that are now before me. I regret that the members of the Hindu Mahashabha have taken what appears to be their own peculiar line. Our objection should not be to Muslims getting a majority of seats on the Executive Council. The most important question is what type of Muslims come into the Executive Council. If we have Muslims of the type of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Asaf Ali, Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, the destiny of India will be safe. And I personally believe that it is only right to give all freedom to such patriots. There is no difference between a patriotic Muslim and a patriotic Hindu. The British intention in the present case is to give all the Muslim seats to the nominees of the Muslim League. Seats reserved for the Caste Hindus should all be given to the Congress. For the remaining seats, the Viceroy will appoint his own nominee, who will act according to the Viceroy's directions.

"Now the question arises as to whether the Muslim League members in the Executive Council will co-operate with the Viceroy. Personally, I am absolutely certain that they will do so because the Viceroy has agreed to give them a weightage in his Executive Council. If the Muslim League co-operates with the British Government in its war effort, then the British purpose of exploiting Indian manpower and resources for fighting Britain's imperialistic war will be easily fulfilled.

"In conclusion, I want to say that though I do not agree with the line of approach of the members of the Hindu Mahasabha of the anti-Pakistan front, I feel very strongly that they have done a great service to India by giving an outspoken expression to their opposition to Lord Wavell's

plan. In fact, I should go one step further, and say that at this critical juncture it is the duty of all right-thinking and patriotic Indians, particularly of all progressive Congressmen, to start a raging and tearing campaign all over the country against Lord Wavell's offer. Mahatma Gandhi has always been responsive to public opinion as a leader should be. By declining to represent the Congress officially at the Simla Conference, he has done the right thing and kept himself free to adopt the line which he thinks is right and in accordance with the wishes of the people and in the true interests of India."

Again on the 20th June, Netaji spoke over the radio:—

"To those who are now eager to accept Lord Wavell's offer, I should like to put a few questions in order to clarify the issue before us. (i) What has happened to our goal of Independence, to which there is not even a partial reference in Lord Wavell's offer? (ii) Does Purna Swaraj mean only Indianisation of the Viceroy's Council, or does it mean complete independence and a total severance of the British connection? (iii) Why did the Congress Ministries resign in 1939? (iv) What has happened to our slogan 'Do or Die'? (v) Why did we condemn Congressmen like Shri Aney and Dr. Khare for accepting jobs on the Viceroy's Executive Council?

"Lord Wavell's proposal may best be described, in the words of the late Vithalbhai Patel, as "Swaraj for the Viceroy", but not even Swaraj for the Executive Council.....

"Sisters and brothers at home! At this critical hour the destiny of India lies in your hand. Now is your time for starting the 'Quit India' campaign all over the country and thereby making it impossible for any one to arrive at a compromise."

Netaji again spoke over the radio on 26th June, 1945. He said:—

".....I understand that some of the leaders at home are furious with me for opposing their plans for a compro-

mise with the British Government. They are also furious with me for pointing out the blunders of the Congress Working Committee and the Congress; and they are furious with me for pointing out that the Congress Working Committee does not represent national opinion in the Congress or in the country. These imperialist leaders are abusing me for taking the help of the Japanese. I am not ashamed of taking the help of Japan. My co-operation with Japan is on the basis that Japan recognizes India's complete independence, and it has already granted formal recognition to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind or Free India. But those who now want to co-operate with the British Government and fight Britain's imperialist war are prepared to accept the position of subordinates responsible to Britain's Viceroy in India. If leaders co-operate with the British Government on the basis that Britain grants formal recognition to the Government of Free India, that would be a different matter. Moreover, Japan has given us the arms with which to organise an army of our own, with which we can fight British imperialism which is our sole enemy. This army, the Azad Hind Fauj, has been trained by Indian instructors using the Indian language. This army carries India's National Flag and its slogans are India's national slogans. This army has its own Indian officers and its own officers' training schools run entirely by Indians. And, in the field of battle, this army fights under its own Indian commanders some of whom have now reached the rank of general. If this army is called a 'puppet army', then it is the British Indian Army that should be called 'puppet army' because it is fighting Britain's imperialist war under British officers. Am I to believe that in an army of 2,500,000 only a microscopic number of Indians are fit to obtain the highest honour in the British Army, namely, the Victoria Cross? Not one single Indian has yet been found fit to hold the rank of a General.

"Comrades! I have said that I am not ashamed to seek the help of Japan. I can go forward and say that if the



almighty British Empire can go down on its knees in order to obtain the help of the United States of America, there is no reason why we, an enslaved and disarmed nation, should not take help from our friends. Today we are taking the help of Japan, tomorrow we shall not hesitate to get help from any other Power that might be possible, if that be desirable in the interests of India. Nobody will be more happy than myself if we could achieve India's independence without foreign help of any sort. But I have to find out one single instance in modern history, where an enslaved nation has achieved its liberation without foreign help of any sort."

After our arrival in Saigon, we re-organized the Indian Independence League, established different Branches and increased the staff in order to smoothly, expeditiously and efficiently carry out the programme of work and intensify the collection of funds. S. A. Iyer re-organized and strengthened the Department of Publicity and Propaganda and paid special attention to the programme of work in the radio station at Saigon, which greatly increased in efficiency. I wrote a small pamphlet as a message for the people (Indians as well as Annamites) living in Indo-China. This was translated into French and Tamil, but only the French edition could be published at the time.

I got in touch with the Japanese Military Headquarters of the Southern Regions and discussed with them our future plan and movement. In the last resort the possibilities of at least a Brigade of the Azad Hind Fauj going into Northern China along with Netaji was discussed. The Japanese said that it would be extremely difficult, and they did not relish the idea that we should ever come in contact with the Russians in the north. I tried to impress upon them the urgent necessity of bringing about a rapprochement between Chungking and Yen-an and being on friendly terms with the Russians in order to bring about peaceful conditions in Asia. They were very hesitant and enquired why we were not relying on them implicitly. However, the matter

was dropped. I submitted my report of the negotiations to Netaji and a representative from the Southern Regions Army Headquarters also went to Singapore and saw him. A Staff officer from the Imperial Headquarters in Tokyo also came to see Netaji.

The League office was shifted from the hired building, where it was, to another more suitable building, which was a gift. Collections were started not on a community basis but on the assessment of the individuals on the principles laid down by the Board of Management for Collecting Funds for the Provisional Government of Free India. A new special feature was introduced, and that was a rebate which was granted if the payments were made within a certain date, while a penalty was added if the amounts were not made within the promised period. This worked very well and funds poured in. Northern Indo-China had not been tackled till then, and the League there was not functioning properly. So A. M. Sahay was sent from Bangkok and arrived in Saigon not long after our arrival. We decided that he should proceed to Hanoi as soon as transport was available and tackle Tonkin and Laos areas, while I would look after Cochin China, Cambodia and Annam.

We made preparations to celebrate the Netaji Week from the 4th to the 11th July as fittingly as possible. Instructions were issued for the flying of the National Tricolour Flag from the houses of all Indians. Lectures were given in mass meetings that were held. Cinema shows were given where patriotic films were exhibited. Sports meetings were held, and school children, largely consisting of Annamite children, were given sweets. A procession was held in which a large garlanded portrait of Netaji was carried in a decorated car. S. A. Iyer, A. M. Sahay and myself followed the car and marched with the procession passing through the important streets. Almost all Indians joined the procession, which was the first of its kind for the Indian community and, as a matter of fact, the first of its

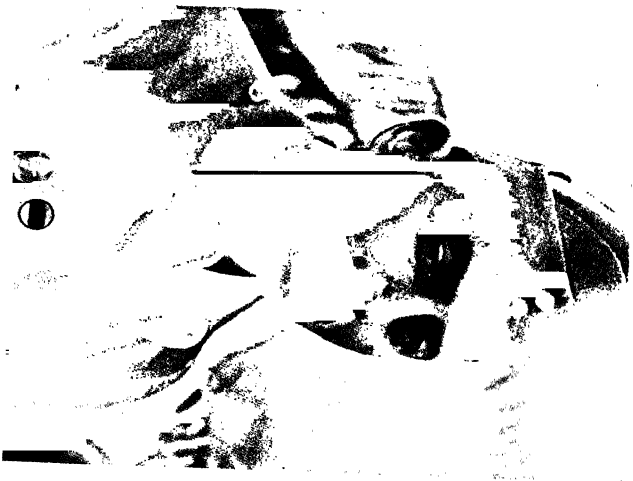
kind for several years for any community. The Annamite people heartily cheered the procession as it passed along the different routes in Saigon. Narayandas Khemlani, Chandanmal, Khiamal, Sheikh Mohammad, Moulvi Khalilur Rahman and Ramnath, who were patriotic Indians, greatly helped the Movement.

A few days after the celebration of the Netaji Week a man came to see me and gave his name as Gulam Ahmed. He said that he had heard me speaking in the lecture theatre and was now fully satisfied that the Muslims would receive their due share and so wanted to join the Movement. He was educated and had done some account-keeping. He acknowledged that he had served in the Hongkong Police for about 16 years but he villified the British for having left him in the lurch when evacuating Hongkong, and he was now without any resources. He carried on somehow or other, but he needed help now. So I asked him what he wanted. He said he wanted an employment in the Movement. Judging his qualifications, I gave him employment as an accountant in the Finance Department, which he took up immediately. When he learnt that A. M. Sahay was proceeding to Hanoi, he asked permission to proceed with him and work there. This was sanctioned. He went to Hanoi along with A. M. Sahay with another Muslim worker named Tora Khan.

The news of the Japanese surrender came in on the 10th August, 1946. I immediately wired to Netaji for instructions and said that if I did not get any reply by the 13th, I would take necessary action on my own initiative. I received a wire on the 13th instructing me to return to Singapore. I left Saigon by plane with over four million *piastres* in gold, cash and a bank draft. I was definitely told by the Japanese Liaison Officer, who came to see me off at the aerodrome, that the plane was going direct to Singapore. It headed also that way, but when it was about the middle of the Gulf of Siam, it suddenly turned north-west, and ultimately landed at Taiping aerodrome. There

were other passengers in the same plane. We were told that it had landed there for re-fuelling, and we saw that it did re-fuel; but after about an hour we were told that the plane would not proceed to Singapore, and we had to make our own arrangements to proceed there. A car took us to the town where, at the Japanese Military Hostel, I luckily met an officer of the Japanese Liaison Office. I told him about the situation and he immediately got into telephonic communication directly with his Headquarters in Singapore and mentioned to them that if I was urgently needed there, and if it was possible for them, they should send another plane from Singapore to take me there, otherwise I would be proceeding by car and that this intimation was to be sent on to Netaji. We waited there for about three hours, and as no plane arrived, the officer offered to take me in his own car to Ipoh where, he said, a car would be put at my disposal by Lt.-Col. Dara who was in charge of the troops of the Azad Hind Fauj in that station. We started late in the afternoon and reached Ipoh before evening. Lt.-Col. Dara was kind enough to offer us dinner and after that we started again. It was still night when we reached Kuala Lumpur. We met there Col. I. J. Kiani who offered us early next morning a guard of Azad Hind troops to follow us in a truck as the roads were dangerous, being infested by bandits. However, we reached Singapore at 3 o'clock in the afternoon without any incidents. I went to Netaji's house, and to my dismay I found that he had been anxiously waiting for me and had left that morning at 10 o'clock by plane for an unknown destination. I got into touch with Maj.-Gen. M. Z. Kiani and also with the Headquarters of the Japanese Liaison Office. Lt.-Col. Morata came to see me and promised to find out the destination of Netaji, if possible. I told him that I wanted definite information and that I did not want to make a wild-goose chase. I made up my mind that if I was unable to find out where Netaji had gone, I would remain in Singapore and surrender there. Maj.-Gen. Kiani said that as I had arrived, I should

take charge of the affairs there. I said that I would do so if I was unable to follow Netaji and remained in Singapore. I handed over most of the cash to Maj-Gen. Kiani for the use of the Azad Hind Fauj and the balance to a committee of Indians, which I formed immediately, for the relief and defence of the Indians who had joined the Movement. On the 19th Col. Morata saw me again and said that Netaji had gone to Bangkok and from there he would be proceeding to Saigon and that I should proceed immediately to Saigon, where I would find Netaji. Col. Morata further insisted that all Ministers and Advisers of the Provisional Government should leave Singapore. Thivi readily agreed to accompany me while Sarkar remained behind. I told Col. Morata that he should make arrangements to bring me back to Singapore if I failed to get in touch with Netaji. I definitely told him that I did not want to make a wild-goose chase. He promised to do so and he said he would accompany me to Saigon. So, early in the following morning I left with Thivy and Prannath (my A.D.C.) for Saigon, accompanied by Col. Morata. We reached Saigon about midday. There I found that Netaji had left for an unknown destination on the 18th and that Iyer had followed him in another plane on the 19th, while Col. Gulzara Singh, Debnath Das, Maj. Abid Hussain, and Col. Pritam Singh had left Saigon that morning in another plane. I was told later by the above-mentioned officers that when Netaji had arrived in Bangkok on the 16th, he wanted to take with him a number of Ministers and Advisers of the Provisional Government of Free India. Therefore, all the other officers mentioned above were brought to Saigon along with Netaji. The Japanese authorities definitely promised to make arrangements for all the officers to accompany Netaji. On the 17th, the Japanese military authorities told Netaji that they could get one seat in a plane only for Netaji, but on the 18th morning Netaji insisted on taking his officers with him, but as the Japanese could not provide seats for all of them, Netaji insisted that at least one of them should



Col. Habibur Rahman.



Anandamohan Sahay  
(Secretary—Azad Hind Govt.).



accompany him. To this the Japanese authorities agreed, and Netaji selected Col. Habibur Rahman to go with him. On the 21st Col. Morata came and apologised that neither was he going back to Singapore as he had been detained by the Headquarters of the Japanese Army of the Southern Regions for working in Saigon, nor would the plane be able to go back to Singapore. He said he had not been able to ascertain where Netaji had gone, but the officers were in Hanoi and my instructions would be there with them and that I should therefore proceed to Hanoi immediately. He said he would make all the necessary arrangements and would send an officer to accompany me. I again said that I was prepared to go to Hanoi, but if I did not find anybody there, the plane must bring me back to Saigon. So, early next morning we left Saigon and reached Hanoi late in the afternoon. We waited at the aerodrome till evening and reached the house where the other Ministers and Advisers were. There was a good deal of hush-hush about them and evidently the Japanese did not want anybody to know that we were there. I met my comrades there. They had no idea of my coming there and said they did not themselves know of the instructions they had to follow or the destination to which Netaji had proceeded. Next day, on the 23rd, A. M. Sahay brought the news that the Tokyo Radio had announced that the plane carrying Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Col. Habibur Rahman had crashed in Taihoku (Formosa) on the 18th while trying to take off from the aerodrome. The news undoubtedly stunned us, but frankly speaking, none of us believed it to be true. Next day we moved into another house which we rented on our own.

We then rented another house and stayed on in Hanoi. The work of the League in Hanoi was stopped by A. M. Sahay and the office was closed. The men were paid off. After a few days Gulam Ahmed and Tora Khan came and asked for some further help. The former gentleman particularly appealed that he had practically no funds and



wanted to go back to Saigon, for which he required money. We gave them one thousand piasters each and they were perfectly happy. I warned my comrades that the purpose of the former person's going back to Saigon was very likely to get in touch with the British as soon as they came in and to give information regarding us. I therefore advised my comrades that if anyone wanted to get into China, he should get away. We tried to get further news about Netaji but did not succeed. The conditions in Indo-China as well as that part of China which was immediately to the north and east of Tonking were very unsettled. We explored all the possibilities of going to North China, but we found the situation wholly unfavourable and we were also advised not to make any attempt until five or six months later, when the railway might be put in order. We, therefore, decided to stay where we were and watch for developments. While staying there some of us saw one Chopra, a correspondent of All India Radio who had arrived in Hanoi from Chungking. We were told he was making enquiries regarding us but months passed and nothing happened. Later on when we heard in November over the radio that Maj.-Gen. Shah Nawaz Khan and Cols. Dhillon and Seghal had been arrested and were going to be tried by court-martial for carrying out their duties in accordance with the I.N.A. Act which the Provisional Government of Free India had promulgated, we immediately decided that we should get back to India as soon as possible and for that purpose surrender to the British authorities as soon as they reached Hanoi. We had seen the Chinese military authorities and had told them our plan. We explained to them that our one object in surrendering to the British here was to get into India as soon as possible and shoulder the full charge and responsibility which had now been thrown on Maj.-Gen. Shah Nawaz and his colleagues. If we had not heard about this trial, we would have gone into China as soon as conditions became a little more settled. They agreed that this was the best course in the circumstances. I again

warned my comrades that any one who did not want to surrender and get back to India immediately should get away now. Accordingly Prannath and later Debnath Das went away.

One day Thivy happened to see Gulam Ahmed in one of the streets of Hanoi. He had had no beard before, but had grown one now and had apparently darkened his face. He tried to avoid Thivy, but the latter caught him by the arm and asked him how he was there. He said he had tried to get down to Saigon but on the way he was stopped by the Annamites and relieved of all the money he had with him, so he had come back. A few days later, I saw a car about a furlong away from our house waiting on the roadside in which there was a British officer with a Gurkha hat on, who turned out later to be Lt.-Col. Wilson of the British Mission, and with him was sitting Gulam Ahmed. As soon as they saw me, they drove away. I mentioned this fact to my comrades.

On the 18th December Ananda Mohan Sahay sent a letter he had received from Lt.-Col. Wilson who was the head of the British Military Mission which had arrived, asking for an interview and suggesting that we might see him in the British Mission office. Sahay had asked for advice as to what was to be done in the circumstances. I said that there was no harm at all in seeing him but that he should come to our place first. The reply was sent back accordingly. Lt.-Col. Wilson had also asked as to how he should come—whether in civilian dress or in uniform. I had suggested that he might come in civilian dress. Next day we received the reply that he would meet us in our house at 3 o'clock in the afternoon. We did not know whether he would accept our suggestion and he might come in uniform fully armed and might try to play mischief, so we had taken full precautions against any accident. He came at 3 o'clock in uniform and armed. He made the excuse that as conditions in the city were very dangerous, he had

to come to our place armed. He said he had come to meet us and ascertain whether certain information he had received from the Chinese authorities were correct. He asked us whether it was correct that we wanted to get back to India. I said, "Yes, we want to get back to India as soon as possible." On hearing that he said, "Do you realise what will happen to you when you get into India?" I said, "Yes, we will be put under arrest, put into jail, tortured and sent to the gallows, or shot." He laughed and said, "No no, nothing of the kind is going to happen to you in that way." I replied that we were ready for all emergencies. Then I told him there was one little point which we would like to get cleared up, if possible, before we started and it was this: We wanted to know if the Indian National Congress had any objection to our going to India at this time. If we could be sure that they had no particular objection, we would go there without the slightest hesitation. He replied that it was perfectly easy for him to ascertain the views of the Congress because he was in direct wireless communication with Calcutta three times a day: 11-30 A.M., 4-30 P.M. and 9-30 P.M. He said he would go back immediately and try to get in touch with Calcutta and if he got any news, he would let us know and then we could meet again. Provisionally we fixed the time at 4 o'clock next day for our meeting at a neutral place. He also said that if he got definite news he would send cars for us, otherwise he would send information so that we need not come. Next day we waited till 4 o'clock but nothing happened. It was nearly 5 P.M. when we sent a messenger to find out whether he was coming to meet us or not as cars had not arrived till then. A little later the cars arrived and we were told that he was waiting at the place of our meeting. All of us went there and we found Wilson standing on the footpath. Wilson came into one of the cars and said we need not get down there, and we drove to the Headquarters of the British Mission. It seemed a little peculiar but we did not mind. When we went inside a room in the house

he said he was very sorry that since yesterday after his meeting us, things had changed. He had received orders from Maj-Gen. Gray that we were to consider ourselves under arrest now. He was sorry that the arrangements he was trying to make were changed. We replied we were ready for any eventuality and we did not mind. He said he did not want to make a fuss about it and we could go back to our quarters and get our things packed, and he asked us how long it would take us to do so. We replied we would be ready in an hour's time. He accordingly arranged for our transport and escort. He said we were to hand over all our arms and any cash money or gold that we had. We went back to our quarters, handed over our arms and ammunition and returned to the Mission Headquarters where we handed over our gold and cash money. Here one of the senior officers—a Lt.-Col.—addressed us as rebels. Sahay immediately replied to him that we were not rebels, we were now subjects of a Free Government and did not owe any allegiance to the British Government. After that he went away and brought certain newspapers one of which—a copy of *The Times*—which contained an account of a parliamentary debate giving the statement of Mr. Attlee, the Prime Minister, and pointed out to us specifically to read that statement in which Mr. Attlee was supposed to have told that he did not believe in treating people continually as rebels and he referred to Mr. Churchill who agreed with him. This was in connection with a reference to General Louis Botha and Field Marshal Smuts, who had fought the British in the Boer War and were later ardent supporters of the British.

We saw Ghulam Ahmed in the British Mission in full British uniform and he accompanied us to Saigon on the next day when we were taken by plane to that place. There we were lodged for the night in the military prison. The following day we were taken to Singapore and were lodged in the Pearl Hill jail and each one of us was put separately in a cell meant for ordinary criminals. There were no

British warders there, only Indians and Australians. The Australians were particularly good to us. After three days we were taken out of these cells and put in another ward, which was a much better building, and we could mix and talk to each other. While staying in the cells the Australian warders allowed us to go and stay during the day in a common yard where all political prisoners—Indians, Chinese, Anglo-Indians, Indonesians—were allowed to remain and have their meals. Our civilian friends in Singapore were kind enough to supply us with meals from outside, both morning and evening. We were all very grateful to them for this kindness. At the end of the day, before our lock-up, we Indians all stood to attention and sang our National Anthem. Again, just at the time when the lights were out in the cells, one of us sang our anthem. Investigation by the Combined Intelligence Service and Detailed Investigation Corps into our activities started. After three days' examination we were separated. I was sent to Bidadari Camp and put in charge of the I.N.A. hospital as Maj-Gen. Allagappan had been sent to India. Sahay, Thivi and Maj. Abid Hussain remained in the Pearl Hill jail, while Col. Gulzara Singh and Lt-Col. Pritam Singh were sent to Changi prison where they were put to as much inconvenience and trouble as possible. They were subjected to torture in the sense that they were not allowed to sleep. Lights were thrown on their cells and the guards tramped on the roof and knocked at the door constantly. Lt-Col. Pritam Singh suffered from diarrhoea because of the abominable food that was being given to them. However, after nearly three weeks of torture, they were sent to India. We all reached India by about the second week of March and were first lodged in the Red Fort for a few days, and then transferred to Kabul Lines where we met most of our colleagues. From there we were ultimately released. Sahay and Major Abid Hussain also came to India after a time, but Thivy, though released, remained in Malaya.

While in Singapore, we heard about the historic trial of Major-General Shah Nawaz Khan, Col. P. K. Seghal and Lt.-Col. G. S. Dhillon, and the most wonderful defence put by late lamented Bhulabhai Desai. This has become a classic, and has firmly established the principle that even for an enslaved people, loyalty to one's own country is paramount over all other loyalties. We also learnt about the tremendous public feeling evinced in support of our cause.

---

## CHAPTER XIV

### WHY WE LOST THE BATTLE

The failure to achieve success in the Battle of Burma was due to many causes. These may be classified under two heads:

#### FIRST STAGE: SEPTEMBER, 1942 TO JUNE, 1943.

(a) Failure of the Japanese to push forward their advance into parts of Bengal and Assam in the middle of 1942. The conditions in India were such—both politically and militarily—that they could easily have achieved success. From the military point of view, at that time there was less than one division of troops in Assam, a weak brigade in Chittagong and less than two divisions in Bengal. Politically India was then seething with discontent. This push would have greatly helped our Movement. Our people could not have been misled and hoodwinked by British propaganda which was so well developed later on.

A section of the Japanese General Staff, including some prominent generals—among whom were Marshal Terauchi who became the Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Imperial Forces in South-east Asia, and General Kawabe who took up the command of the Japanese forces in Burma later on—did not want to invade India as they neither felt any interest nor received any encouragement from the reports received from the prominent leaders of the people of India. The Japanese thought that they had too many commitments on their hands, and in the beginning they thought that they were in no way concerned with the independence of India, particularly as Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and others had definitely declared in open terms that they did not like the Japanese or their aggressive policy in China. The Japanese were, therefore, not at all interested. As a matter of fact, long before the formation

of the I.N.A., the Japanese could have invaded India, if they had so wanted, immediately following up their victory in Burma. They could have achieved much better success in those days than subsequently, when the British had had sufficient time to mobilize and organize the resources of India, helped very greatly by those of the United States of America. They could have gone into India even after the formation of the First I.N.A., but even at that time a lot of discussions and arguments were going on among themselves. It was the hesitation of the Japanese in feeling themselves interested in the Liberation Movement of India in the early stages which considerably delayed the launching of the campaign on the Burma frontier.

We had allowed too long a time to the Allies to make preparations not only for defence but even for an offensive. I would go even a step further. If Netaji had been able to reach Malaya about the middle of 1942 or even in the autumn of that year, the whole picture would have been totally different. We would have achieved our object definitely, for the British were not only not prepared for any offensive on their part, but they had very little defence to put up. As a matter of fact, they had decided to evacuate Assam and Bengal.

(b) Failure of the Japanese to trust fully Captain Mohan Singh—who was a sincere and ardent lover of his Motherland—and agree to the increase of his army and to push forward into India towards the end of 1942 or in the beginning of 1943. Although militarily the position of the enemy had improved in India, the result of the 'Quit India' resolution passed by the All-India Congress Committee and the Indian Nation Congress was wonderful, and the 1942 Rebellion was in full progress. If this rebellion could be helped by an invasion from outside also, the results would have been entirely different. But the Japanese were not fully to be blamed. Unfortunately, the internal dissensions amongst the members of the Council of Action were partly



responsible for this lack of trust. Capt. Mohan Singh did not get the support which he should have received.

(c) Impatience on the part of Capt. Mohan Singh in precipitating the crisis towards the end of 1942. He was a genuine patriot. He was young and was misled, misguided and ill advised by some of the officers who had got round him. Some of these officers were out to sabotage the movement and they, therefore, instead of advising caution and patience, brought about the crisis. There were also quite a few who wanted to get out of the Movement on account of the worsening of the situation in the Middle East; they, too, helped in precipitating the crisis. There were still some others who thought they gauged the trends of popular feeling among the troops much better than others, but in fact they did not, mishandled the situation and thus kept on misinforming him.

(d) The Japanese front had extended from Manchuria to Singapore, and from Guadalcanar and New Guinea to Mandalay. It was a huge area to cope with. Japan was undoubtedly short of supplies, and war today is a war of supplies. With the prolongation of war matters became still more difficult particularly as her lines of communication increased.

(e) (i) *Our own unpreparedness.*

We took a long time to organize the first National Army. Allowance had to be made for divergence of opinion amongst ourselves which delayed our mobilization. If the I.N.A. had been conscripted and not formed on a voluntary basis as it was, we could have organized much earlier, but that would have gone against our principle. Moreover, men forced into the army cannot fight so well.

(ii) *Smaller number of men under arms.*

The Japanese, in the case of the First I.N.A., did not have complete faith in the integrity of that army. They could not believe that an army which was defeated by them and was a mercenary army of the British could take up arms and fight their former masters so easily. They

could not appreciate the depth of the national spirit that informed the troops. This was their blunder. In consequence of their lack of faith they could not immediately allow for the formation of a large army, so they only agreed to the formation of one division in the beginning, and later agreed to the mobilization of four more guerilla regiments. They were not entirely at fault because they became aware of the differences of opinion amongst many of us. They thought that if they agreed to the formation of a large army immediately, the latter might turn against them.

(iii) In the case of the First I.N.A., arrangements for supplies were extremely poor, nor was there sufficient response from the people for contribution in kind and coin, but these things changed completely in the formation of the Second I.N.A. under Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

SECOND STAGE: JULY, 1943, TO APRIL, 1945.

(a) *Faulty Japanese Military Strategy:*

(i) In the beginning of the campaign the Japanese put up an excellent ruse by starting the campaign in the Arakan Hills and the Kaladan Valley. It succeeded very well in annihilating the 7th British Division and pinning down a large British force in that sector. The British were also expecting an attack on the Chittagong front, so they moved down some of their divisions to the Kaladan Valley and the Maungdaw-Buthiadong area. But in opening up the second stage of the campaign in the Kohima area and the third stage of the campaign in the Imphal area, the Japanese completely miscalculated. On the one hand they did not make adequate arrangements for supplying the troops in case the campaign was prolonged, while on the other hand they did not leave any loophole for the enemy to escape when the latter were hard pressed. The Japanese believed in a *blitz* campaign and therefore our people only carried ten days' rations on their back. The Japanese thought they would be able to achieve success in the Manipur area by adopting the same encirclement tactics which they had successfully employed in the Malayan

campaign and thus effected the complete defeat of the British forces there; but in Malaya the British could not send sufficient reinforcements on account of the distance involved nor did they have later on a large number of planes at their disposal. Further, we as well as the Japanese did not possess the same superior armaments as the enemy. Moreover, it has been the history and tradition of the British Army that when hard pressed, if they have any loophole, they do run away but when they are cornered and put at bay, they fight best even if they have to lose in the end. This is well illustrated in history by the battle of the Pyramids in Egypt during Napoleon's campaign in Egypt, the siege of Lucknow in 1857, and the siege of Kut-el-amara in 1916 in Iraq. As a result of this, when our forces, in co-operation with the Japanese army, completely cut off the British forces in the Imphal Plain by occupying Kohima and straddling across the Imphal-Dimapur road in the north and by occupying Bishenpur in the south and west, the enemy forces had no other alternative to continuing the fight as long as possible. This prolonged the campaign. Our troops had very little food, yet because of their excellent morale they made deep raids inside the enemy territories. Our people actually went into Imphal in small groups and brought back information and men from there. Our troops repulsed the bold attacks which were made by the British from their surrounding hills in Palel and other places. They could do this because they were still much better fed than our men, although they, too, were on half ration but still they were many times better off than our men, who in the later stages lived on boiled grass and roots, sometimes relieved by boiled paddy obtained from the villages round about the area where our men were. As long as the weather was dry, such privations could be suffered for some time; even then it was getting more and more difficult but when the monsoon arrived earlier than it was due, it was impossible particularly since our men had nothing more than one cotton blanket and

many had no rain-coats or waterproof sheeting. Even then our information was that the British forces were preparing to surrender inspite of the fact that the British were dropping by plane hundreds of tons of food to the besieged garrison; but a wireless communication was sent by the South-east Asia Command in Ceylon that the monsoon was coming up early and progressing vigorously and instructions were given to continue to hold on. The British knew about our shortcomings and these encouraged the besieged garrison to continue the fight and hold on. They knew that with the advent of the monsoon it would be almost impossible for our troops and the Japanese to remain where we were.

(ii) Further, what had happened with the British forces in Malaya with reference to the lack of air support happened to our forces and those of the Japanese on the Indo-Burma front. While the enemy had any amount of air support, so much so that our lines of communication were constantly menaced and it was extremely difficult to move about during day, we had little or no air support at all. The reason for this lack of air support was that Gen. Yamashita, when he was appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese forces for the defence of the Phillippine Islands against American invasion, insisted on the Imperial General Staff in Tokyo that he could take up the defence of the Islands only if he were given every available plane for the support of the army under his command, and the Japanese General Staff, in order to comply with the demands of Gen. Yamashita, had to withdraw as many planes as possible from the Burma Command. This was disclosed by Marshal Terauchi in the statement he made after the fall of Japan when he divulged for the first time that there were considerable differences of opinion between the Japanese General Staff and some of the prominent officers over undertaking the Indian campaign. He and Gen. Kawabe were on one side and were against this campaign whereas Gen. Tojo and Lt.-Gen. Motaguchi,

Commandant of the Hiashi Butai or the army which had actually undertaken the fighting on the Indo-Burma frontier, were of opinion that even under such conditions the campaign could be made to succeed. It was Gen. Tojo's pull that made the Japanese Government agree to the launching of this campaign. Gen. Tojo was firmly convinced that as long as India could be used by the British as a base—and they could only do so as long as India was enslaved—it would be extremely difficult for the Japanese to attain success in their Greater East Asia War for the liberation of the Asiatic nations who were under foreign domination. It was not as a matter of charity or generosity that the Japanese agreed to help us in our campaign for the freedom of India. They, too, had a very great interest in seeing India free, for it was only in that condition that India could be stopped being used as a base against themselves. Japan had seen time after time that Indians were being used as a mercenary army to subjugate other weaker countries to serve the purpose of British imperialism, so they, too, had a special interest in seeing India independent and free from foreign domination.

(iii) The Japanese strategy of encirclement adopted in the Imphal campaign involved far too great an area and a far stronger and better supplied enemy to be successfully overcome by this tactic. We should have known that the Japanese did not possess sufficient strength in guns of all calibres sufficient to overcome the enemy by sheer weight of lead. And this was all the more important because we had little chance of getting help from the air, while the enemy had enough of air support as well as that of big guns. We should have left a line of retreat open for the enemy to escape by. We should, therefore, have halted on the north at Kohima and not cut off the Imphal-Kohima-Dimapur road or, alternatively, we should have left the Imphal-Sylhet road *via* Bishenpur open for their retreat.

When I met Lt.-Col. Fujiwara who was acting as the Intelligence Officer of the Hiashi Butai and Liaison

Officer between the I.N.A. and the Japanese forces and discussed the circumstances with him he apologized profusely. I told him that our troops had been originally trained and equipped for guerilla warfare whereas a large part of the army was now fighting a frontal attack. With the change of plan there should have been a change with regard to the supply of munitions and supplies. He admitted the mistake of not having an alternative plan in case the first plan was changed or proved a failure. He mentioned that the Japanese had been too optimistic and had expected the British to surrender quickly. The Japanese had under-estimated the strength and resources of the British. He said that they had thought that they were going to catch a big fish, but really they found they had caught a crocodile. As I mentioned before, the Japanese Intelligence service was very poor and on this poor information the whole strategic plan was made. That was why it became faulty. The Japanese did not realise that they had been taking a big bite with the result that they could not successfully swallow what they had bitten. And the mistake we made was that at the initial stage we believed all they said.

*(b) Faulty Japanese Supply System:*

They had wholly underestimated the requirements of our combined army. They were far too optimistic about defeating the enemy and were confident of capturing large quantities of supplies of all kinds in Imphal within a short period. On these two very uncertain factors they had planned their supply arrangements. Although in any case war is a gamble, still reasonable measures have to be taken to cope with the situation that may develop, at least provision must be made for alternative measures if the army has to avert a disaster.

*(c) Faulty Transport system of the Japanese:*

(i) The number of motor vehicles available was not sufficient. Neither were there adequate facilities provided for carrying out repairs for breakdowns. The drivers of

vehicles were supposed to carry out minor repairs themselves. Undoubtedly the Japanese and our drivers were quite good by themselves, but there is a limit to human capacity and they could not possibly go on working day and night for months together with worn-out vehicles. Maj. Harnam Singh, Officer-in-charge, No. 2 Motor Transport Company, was a very resourceful and capable officer. He worked wonders with the worn-out machines, most of which had seen campaign on many fronts, that were handed over to his charge. Here, too, the Japanese were very optimistic about capturing a large number of enemy transports if the *blitz* campaign could be carried out. They underestimated also the cleverness of the enemy. Nearly 600 vehicles were captured round about Tiddim, but the British had cleverly damaged or had removed some essential parts of the engines with the result that the majority of the vehicles could not be used.

(ii) Considering the nature of the terrain, there should have been an arrangement for pack transport, specially in the hilly tracts close to Imphal where it was impossible to take motor vehicles, but this arrangement either did not exist at all or was very poor, with the result that a large number of our men were employed in carrying rations and ammunition over hilly countries for months together at a time when these men should have been available for giving relief to the troops occupying the front-line trenches day after day and night after night. After my meeting with Col. Fujiwara for a short time urging him to provide such transport immediately, a modicum of pack transport was made available for a part of our troops but this arrangement did not last long with the result that our men began to suffer again.

(d) *Failure of the Japanese to supply adequate means of Communication:*

The Japanese had promised to provide telephone and wireless sets for communication. They could not provide these in time. In the beginning they provided some facili-

ties in respect of communication with our troops through their own telephone system; but this was very unsatisfactory because it meant delay and the possibility of misinterpretation. Actually in one of the battles this misinterpretation occurred. As mentioned before, in at least one instance our troops were told to collect at a certain rendezvous on a certain date for launching an attack while the Japanese were to come up and meet our troops and join the attack. On the one hand there was a great deal of delay in sending this information to our troops and on the other they had not sufficient time to make adequate preparations for launching the attack, but in spite of that they reached the rendezvous in time and launched the attack while the Japanese did not turn up at all. Evidently the orders had been countermanded, but our troops did not get this information in time. Our troops went several miles behind the enemy lines and, finding no support coming from the Japanese and seeing that they were getting encircled by the enemy troops, cut their way back through the enemy cordon. They fought very gallantly and actually killed a good number of enemy troops but they themselves also had to suffer heavily. This would not have happened if the means of communication were proper and adequate. This happened in the Palel sector. In the later stages of the war our troops received wireless sets but then the fight was almost over.

(e) *Faulty Roads:*

The roads that the Japanese had built behind the front lines were largely fair-weather roads. There was very little macadam put on them so that when the monsoon came these roads became absolute quagmires and the wheels of the vehicles sank beyond their axles with the result that many of them got stuck and could not be taken out again. The drainage along these roads, too, was very defective and rainwater coming down the hillsides completely washed away several blocks of these roads. Here, again, the Japanese had expected that they would be able



to complete the campaign before the onset of the monsoon and they had only planned and provided for fair-weather conditions.

(f) *Too much dependence on our part on the Japanese for supplies, transport, and communication:*

(i) We had depended far too much upon the Japanese in respect of provisions of supplies, transport and communication. They promised to supply us with all these, but they could not fulfil their promises. Their idea was to have only one agency with regard to these, particularly supplies and transport. They said that if there were too many people in the market, there would be competition as a result of which it would be difficult to get foodstuffs and transport, either the bullock cart or pack animals. But unfortunately they were alienating the feelings of the Burmese by treating them as inferior people and not according to them the respect and love which they should have accorded to a people who had helped them in the campaign. The Burmese were more ready to give to us any supply of transport that was available than to the Japanese. They helped us even up to the last stages. Instead of depending upon the Japanese we should have purchased or commandeered as much transport and radio sets as were available in the market even at prohibitive prices right in the beginning instead of doing so in the later stages when it was too late.

(ii) *Failure on our part to provide iron rations for our troops in time and in the proper way.*

Shakkarpapa of a kind was prepared in Memyo but it was too late and the packing was awful and although large quantities of these were despatched to the front by Japanese transport, most of them got spoiled because the bags made of matting got completely soaked in the rains. Our troops did not get them in time or in good condition. It would have made a tremendous difference in the campaign if our troops as well as those of the Japanese could be provided with iron rations at the time when it was difficult to get

raw articles of food adequate either in quantity or in quality. We should have organized ourselves entirely regarding the provision of rations before the commencement of the campaign.

(iii) *Our failure to provide adequate medical arrangements for our own troops close to the Front line.*

Here, again, we relied too much upon the Japanese to provide for the medical supplies and arrangements for the evacuation and treatment of the sick. The original provision was made according to the plan made for guerilla warfare, but as the situation changed, no alternative plan could be evolved quickly in time to meet the demands of the casualties, with the result that we had to take the help of the Japanese hospitals which were wholly inadequate and unsuitable for our requirements, in consequence of which our men suffered greatly. The Japanese ought to have informed us long before of their incapability to cope with their own people or ours in the event of the plans being changed. Had we had the information early enough we could have made much more satisfactory arrangements than what we did later on when we came to know of things after our visit to Chamol.

(g) *Early onset of monsoon:*

Nature unfortunately was against us. The monsoon arrived at least a fortnight earlier than was expected. This made a tremendous difference in the situation. Our men had neither waterproof coats nor sufficient sheetings to protect themselves. Up in the hills the temperature fell and the men suffered very much from the cold as they had only one cotton blanket each. There was no roof under which they could put their heads and get temporary relief from time to time. The monsoon destroyed the roads in large sections as a result of which communication became very difficult and at places was completely cut. This resulted in worsening the food situation. Indeed, this early onset of the monsoon was the greatest factor which forced us to retreat from the position we had occupied. Up till

then wherever we had attacked we were successful and had never been compelled to retire.

(h) *Shortage of rations:*

Our men started with only ten days' rations carried on their person. There was no pack transport which was so obviously required because of the hilly terrain in Haka, Falam and Imphal areas, and the men had to go up peaks seven to eight thousand feet high and had to trudge at least sixteen miles a day carrying bags of rations. These should have been foreseen and the Japanese should have warned us beforehand, and if they had asked us to make our own arrangements before we took over these sectors from their troops we could have done so. Wherever our people came in contact with Indian troops they contacted in a friendly manner. A large part of them surrendered to us but we had to let them go back on account of the difficulty of rations which we were experiencing. Our troops willingly suffered, but we could not expect nor did we consider it expedient that those who had surrendered to us could be made to suffer in the same way.

(i) *Lack of support from India:*

Our men had been to India and contacted people there. We had broadcast several times; but on the one hand the people in India did not believe in our men or did not believe our broadcasts. They thought it was all Japanese propaganda. On the other hand the British counter-propaganda was excellent and completely hoodwinked our people, with the result that there was no supply of food received from our own country. If they had been able to supply rations for our troops even for a fortnight by some contact, the story of the Imphal campaign might have been written differently.

(j) *Wholly insufficient propaganda work from our side:*

The front line propaganda work in the first stage was very poor. Even the literature printed and packed ready in Rangoon was not carried by the Japanese in transport that was made available for us. There was too much

dependence on our part on transport for carrying rations, ammunition, and other materials. Nor did the Japanese help in distributing from the aeroplanes leaflets which we had specially prepared for the purpose. They wanted to bomb Calcutta but they would not assist in just dropping propaganda leaflets from their planes. There were no loudspeakers in our front lines. We had frontline propaganda parties trained and ready, but they could not be taken there in time due to lack of transport. The net result of this very inadequate propaganda from our side was that on the one hand the civilian population could not appreciate and realize that an independent Indian organization had been completely built up and that Indians were fighting a battle of freedom, while the British-Indian troops did not possess sufficient knowledge about the actual existence of the I.N.A. who were fighting against them. Had we been able to arrange a proper propaganda system in the front line and also inform the civilian population more effectively, the whole picture of the struggle might have been quite different.

(k) *Efficient enemy propaganda:*

(i) IN INDIA:

The British system of propaganda against the Freedom Movement was very efficient. They had depicted this Movement as Japanese-sponsored and not a movement of the people. They carefully kept away from the public the broadcasts of the Provisional Government of Free India. They deliberately suppressed information about the formation of the Azad Hind Fauj under the leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. They did not let the people know that this was an independent army operating entirely under Indian organisation and Indian command.

(ii) OUTSIDE INDIA:

The British had completely misled the world in a similar way. Even on the Indo-Burma Frontier they dropped

leaflets from aeroplanes in huge quantities asking our men to desert when they had actually been suffering from disease and privations—lack of food and clothing. In this respect they did not succeed as they had expected. Our men to a very large extent stood firm in their determination and fought to the last.

*(1) Enormous superiority in number of men and armaments:*

The British and the Allied forces were far superior as compared to us and the Japanese, particularly as regards forces. The real reason of their victory was their overwhelming number of tanks and armoured cars, helped by bomber and fighter aircraft which were practically unchallenged. It is true that our men had tremendous spirit. They fought tanks with hand grenades. Their spirit is proved from the casualty list up to the end of 1944 as given by Churchill on the floor of the House of Commons. The total Allied casualty by that time amounted to 240 thousand, while that of ours and of the Japanese amounted to only 40 thousand, which shows a proportion of 1:6. But spirit alone cannot overcome an overwhelming stream of lead that was constantly poured by the mechanized forces and the much greater number of men equipped with much superior arms. Our men did fight their best, but they were overcome by superior numbers and the tremendous power of the mechanized forces of the enemy.

---

## CHAPTER XV

### WHAT OUR MOVEMENT ACHIEVED

#### *Administrative:*

1. Organized the civil population for total mobilization to face a total war.

2. Operated our own broadcasting station.

3. Practically demonstrated that by simple living and with much less pay, work could be carried out just as efficiently.

4. Established Indian National Schools where teaching of Indian History, Geography, Hindusthani and Physical Training were special features.

5. Introduced Hindusthani in schools and in newspapers in modified Roman alphabet.

6. Published our own newspapers and booklets on national and cultural subjects, elementary hygiene and prevention of disease, elementary nursing and first aid.

7. Established our own bank—National Bank of Azad Hind Ltd.

8. Designed our own currency.

9. Designed and printed our own postage stamps.

10. Prepared a complete code of administration for the working of the Civil Departments.

11. Established training institutions for Civil Administrators and Police.

12. Established a Women's Department to give them full facilities for doing national work, particularly in connection with the liberation of their motherland.

13. We have proved to our countrymen and to the world that Indians, given adequate opportunity, can organize and establish a Government and an Army of their own.

*Economic:*

1. Enabled the Indians in East and South-east Asia to trade and prosper freely during the War. Immense fortunes were made by them.

2. Completely organized the system of supplies and established workshops.

*International:*

1. Raised the honour and prestige of Indians in the eyes of other nations.

2. Enabled the Indians in East and South-east Asia to remain free.

3. Have been able to focus the attention of other nations and have been instrumental in getting them interested in the question of Indian independence, and thus to bring India's claim for complete freedom out of the domain of purely British domestic policy and put it on an international plane. This was fully proved by the speech of M. Molotov at the San Francisco Conference in 1945. It is reported that even President Roosevelt tried to induce Mr. Churchill to take steps towards India's freedom.

4. Have been instrumental in establishing the fact through the able and classical defence by Bhulabhai Desai that when the loyalty of a national of a subject nation comes in conflict with his loyalty to the ruling power, loyalty to one's own country becomes paramount.

*Military:*

1. For the first time in the history of India in modern times, a truly Indian National Army was organized, trained and commanded entirely by Indian officers.

2. For the first time an Indian Army had its words of command in Hindusthani.

3. The I.N.A. fought against the British and their Allies entirely under the command of Indian officers.

4. A National Indian Army organized and commanded by Indians only fought against British forces and thus broke

down the halo that had grown up in India around the British armed power.

5. For the first time Indian officers prepared their plans and operations in co-operation with a first-class foreign Allied Power and issued their own battle orders.

6. An Indian National Army, notwithstanding very inferior equipments and with an extremely poor supply system, was able to advance into India up to a depth of over 100 miles and occupy several hundred square miles of territory.

7. Wherever the Azad Hind Fauj was on the offensive there was not a single instance in which our forces sustained a reverse.

8. There is not a single occasion when the enemy, despite his overwhelming superiority in men and armaments, was able to capture a post held by our forces. On the other hand, there were very few instances in which our forces attacked a British post and failed to capture it.

9. For the first time an Officers' and N.C.O.'s Training School was organized and established entirely under the control and supervision of, and with the teaching staff consisting of, Indian officers and N.C.O.'s.

10. For the first time training in wireless and infiltration work was planned and carried out under entirely Indian control and supervision.

11. For the first time, a new system and method of training medical officers, medical assistants, and nurses was conceived and carried out successfully entirely by Indian medical officers.

12. Our revolution has produced Generals of our own Army. The British, although they expanded their Indian Army enormously and enlisted over 2½ million men, could not concede to a single Indian officer the rank of a Major-General. It is futile and absurd to say that they had no capable Indians to be promoted to such ranks. The promotion to the rank of a Brigadier was given when the Britishers saw that we had at least four Major-Generals. Capable



officers of the British Indian Army like Brigadier Kariappa and others are in no way inferior to the dozens of Britishers who have been promoted to the rank of Major-Generals.

13. We have proved that given the opportunity, Indian officers can show their initiative, power of organization and of command and lead the troops successfully to achieve their objective against heavy odds.

14. We completely cast away some of the old customs, systems and practices of the Indian Army and introduced entirely new ones:

- (i) abolished the cadre of V.C.O's and Warrant Officers;
- (ii) abolished the medical groups of the I.M.D. and I.H.C. and established only one medical cadre. The British in India followed our example;
- (iii) introduced a system of spiritual training;
- (iv) made it possible for anyone to rise from the lowest to the highest rank irrespective of caste or creed.
- (v) introduced a common kitchen from where Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Christians took their food. They all sat together when partaking of their meals;
- (vi) introduced joint participation in religious festivals;
- (vii) established Indian Orders and Medals for bravery and administrative ability;
- (viii) enacted our own code of military law—I.N.A. Act.

15. It also showed that Indians could successfully command their people and win the respect of other nations in the field of battle.

16. It showed that the Indian troops could undergo far more privations and sufferings, and fight far more intensively, when they were fighting for their own country, than when they were fighting for mercenary reasons.

17. We have been instrumental in bringing about a new awakening and a national outlook and spirit in the Indian Army in India which has been evinced by (a) the support it has given to the Azad Hind Fauj when the British Commander-in-Chief took gallup polls. On the first occasion, 80 per cent of the Indian Army solidly voted in favour of no action being taken against the Azad Hind Fauj. Not being satisfied, he took a second poll and it resulted in showing that 78 per cent were still of the same opinion. If one knew the conditions that ordinarily prevailed in this Army, how people were won over by the bestowal of special favours such as grant of lands, titles, privileges and money, the result of the poll was very remarkable. The Indian Army of today is different from what it was before. It will no longer submit to unjust and unfair treatment which was the rule before. The revolts in the Indian Air Force, the Indian Navy and sections of the Indian Army have shown that spirit.

18. Established the Rani of Jhansi Regiment which demonstrated that the women of India could also bear arms and bear hardships and privations in an armed campaign.

19. We were able to save the lives of thousands of troops. One can judge from the fact that our total casualties amounted to 4,000 from a group of 20,000 troops, while the casualties among the Indian prisoners of war under Japanese control amounted to 11,000 out of a group of 40,000.

20. We have given the lie to the British propaganda about the "martial" and "non-martial" races for the purposes of *divide et impera*. The men belonging to the South and the East fought as tenaciously and ferociously as those coming from the North and the West.

#### *Political.*

1. Aroused the political consciousness of the Indians in South-east Asia in a most remarkable manner. Where there was ignorance and apathy, it awakened the thirst for information and knowledge and remarkable enthusiasm and initiative. Before the Indian Independence Movement

was started in South-east Asia, the political consciousness of the Indians was almost nil. Except for a few, they were largely looked down upon by other races, and it would be no exaggeration to say that when the word 'Indian' was uttered with reference to these regions—particularly Malaya—it referred mainly to coolies or labourers. There was very little cohesion or organization amongst themselves. Some of them did earn some money as traders, but it was entirely on an individual basis. So far as the freedom of their Motherland was concerned, they dared not speak or say anything. This was as true of Malaya as any other part in that region. Any Indian who talked about Indian Independence was put into trouble. Still it cannot be denied that the desire for freedom of their Mother country was dear to the heart of every Indian, but it lay dormant and could not be expressed unless at a personal risk. That is why with the defeat of the British in South-east Asia and the inauguration of the Independence Movement the people spontaneously joined the Movement in very large numbers as if their mainspring had been touched. They offered their personal services as well as their material resources; whole families joined up. This could not have been possible if they did not have the innate desire in their minds to see their country free from foreign domination. But they did not possess the courage or the resources or the power of organization to put their desire into practice. They needed a leader in whom they could have implicit faith to guide them through their ordeal. This they found in Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, to whose appeals they responded spontaneously. Now the Indians have become organized and do not have to walk timidly or to be constantly afraid lest any of their actions be disliked by others. Today the Chinese community respects them and loves them. They go with their heads high. Today they are fully convinced that not only do they want freedom of their Motherland, but they have a firm conviction that that freedom is near at hand. They believe that it requires one more struggle and the

shackles of slavery will burst. Today they are prepared to pay that price in life and material without which freedom has never been gained.

2. Brought about unity amongst Indians in South-east Asia. Prior to the Independence Movement, Indians were mostly divided. At the most, there was some provincial consciousness, but there was neither the sense of unity nor unity of purpose excepting a dormant notion that they were a subject nation and wanted freedom in order to ameliorate their condition. The Independence Movement in South-east Asia brought into very close unity different classes of Indians—Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Tamils, Telegus, Malayalis, Lamas, and even the people of Ceylon joined the Movement.

3. Brought about a burning desire amongst the Indians in South-east Asia for the complete independence of the Motherland—freedom from any foreign domination—for which they were prepared to sacrifice their lives and property. Tens of thousands of people joined the Azad Hind Fauj, and more would have joined if they had been required. Tens of crores of dollars were given in the form of subscriptions and donations.

4. Have been able to rouse public spirit in the nation's cause to tremendous heights. This was evinced by the demonstrations in favour of the I.N.A. It was entirely due to the force of public opinion that the British Commander-in-Chief was compelled to set free the first three officers who had been put on trial. He realised that his Government had committed a big blunder in holding these trials. The masses have regained faith in themselves. They are ready to pay the price for their freedom. The Provisional Government of Free India won recognition from the Governments of nine independent nations.

#### *Religious:*

Brought about perfect communal harmony amongst Indians of different denominations and creeds both in the

Indian National Army, Azad Hind Dal and the general public in South-east Asia.

In the Indian National Army, we had Hindus like Major-General J. K. Bhonsle, Major-General A. D. Loganadan, Major-General Alagappan, Colonel Kulvant Rai; Muslims like Major-General M. Z. Kiani, Major-General Aziz Ahmed Khan, Major-General Shah Nawaz Khan, and Colonel Habibur Rahman; Sikhs like Colonel Gulzara Singh, Lt.-Col. Pritam Singh and Lt.-Col. Thakkar Singh; Christians like Lt.-Col. Stracey, Lt.-Col. Rodrigues and Major Lewis. Amongst the civilians we had Hindus like A. N. Sarcar, Pundit Sharma, Yelappa, Dina Nath; Muslims like D. K. Khan, Maulvi Ali Akbar, Maulvi Mukaddas, *Sewak-i-Hind* Habib, Bashir and Nizami; Sikhs like Sardar Ishar Singh, Sardar Sadhu Singh, Sardar Hardial Singh; Christians like John A. Thivy, D. V. John and others. The bond that held them together was their love for the Motherland and the personal example of Netaji, and they knew no religious differences.

---

## CHAPTER XVI

### WHY NETAJI WAS A SUCCESSFUL LEADER

In the life-history of a nation leaders appear from time to time particularly in times of crisis. The nation which is virile and possesses the spirit of nationalism produces such a leader who can give the correct directive to the nation's activities at the critical period. The more a nation is alive the greater the chances of such a leader coming forward to lead the nation. National leaders are usually born as such, but they must possess certain definite basic fundamental qualities without which they cannot perform the functions expected of them. Some of these qualities, such as personality, power of command, initiative, courage, determination and sincerity, are inherent in a leader and are manifested even in the early stages of his life, while there are other qualities, such as a wider outlook of the world, knowledge of the different characteristics and problems concerning his own nation as well as of the world, power of organization, assaying correctly the value of different things, procedure and method of tackling different problems etc., which are acquired or developed with the advance of age and growth of experience of the leader.

Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was a born leader of this country. He showed the first signs of leadership when as a college student he led the students in the Presidency College who protested against the ill-behaviour of Professor Oaten towards the students of that college. Later, when for a time he came under the influence of his father and tried to serve the country through official channels, he went and successfully passed the I.C.S. Examination. But on his return he was profoundly affected by the political atmosphere in the country and the rapid progress of events from 1919 to 1921. When Mahatma Gandhi called upon the nation for non-violent non-co-operation, young Subhas

Chandra immediately responded to Mahatmaji's clarion call, gave up his official position, and joined the Movement. This meant a sacrifice which not many can easily make. This movement was undoubtedly a national movement as it was based on Hindu-Muslim unity and a struggle which was a stepping stone for achieving the freedom of the country. He saw the nationwide upheaval which spread throughout the length and breadth of India in 1920-21. He studied deeply the political problems of the country and made up his mind. Among other qualities he possessed all those mentioned before, but there were some in which he was most outstanding. These were, first, his sincerity of purpose which in practical public life meant determined and uncompromising opposition towards British rule in India. Secondly, his unbounded love for his people and country. Thirdly, his power of organization. Fourthly, his political sagacity and farsightedness.

*Uncompromising opposition to British rule in India:—*

He joined wholeheartedly the national movement for the freedom of the Motherland, and since then it was his consistent policy to oppose British rule in India. His determined and uncompromising attitude to the existing system was not only remarkably shown at the All-India Congress session at Ramgarh and from his sick-bed at Tripuri, but also by his repeated incarceration in British jails and detention and exiles in lands beyond the borders of his mother country. In spite of the fact that during a fairly long period his health was failing from time to time, he never flinched for a moment in his determination to uproot British rule from the country. That this was the correct lead is amply proved by his re-election for a second term of Presidentship of the Indian National Congress in spite of the fact that Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress High Command opposed his stand against Pattabhi Sitaramayya. The youth of the country gave him unstinted support and he won the election by a huge majority. That means the country was solidly behind him at the time.

Later, when on account of internal dissensions which really, in certain instances, amounted almost to betrayal, he was made to stand down, it was his undaunted determination to break the system of government which was tyrannizing the people that induced him to leave his country so that he could, if possible, try for liberation from outside the country. The step he took was not only most inconvenient but dangerous for himself. If he had adopted the line of least resistance by remaining in India, and had passed his time as a guest of His Britannic Majesty, it would have been a far more comfortable life for him, a life far less risky and dangerous for himself. But it was his absolute and uncompromising determination against the present system of government that guided his footsteps in adopting the line of action that he took in 1941. His subsequent action in leading the Indian Independence Movement in S.-E. Asia, re-organizing the Azad Hind Fauj, and fighting on the Indo-Burma Front, only still further lucidly shows his consistent and determined opposition to British rule in India.

*Love for his people and country:—*

(i) He was essentially kind-hearted, but his love for his people and country knew no bounds. From an early age his character showed that he felt deeply for the poor. His heart longed to serve the *daridranarayan* of his country. He loved all, but he had special affection for the youth of his country. He always appealed to them for devoting their lives to the service of their country and personally set the example.

(ii) His love for his people was irrespective of caste, creed or race. It was the love for his people, their extreme poverty and their systematic exploitation that roused in him the determination to break the present system of government to release his people from slavery and promote their welfare. His whole life and the different steps that he took from time to time and the sacrifices that he had made all denoted the basic foundation of his love for his



people and country. This is beautifully exemplified in his statement which he sent to H. E. the Governor of Bengal as well as the Cabinet of Ministers in Bengal in November, 1940, from prison. He said in his statement: "Though there may be no immediate tangible gain, no sacrifice is ever futile. It is through suffering that in every age and clime the eternal law prevails that 'the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church.' In the mortal world everything perishes and will perish, but ideas, ideals and dreams do not. One individual may die for an idea, but that idea will, after his death, incarnate itself in a thousand lives. That is how the wheels of evolution move on and the ideas and dreams of one generation are bequeathed to the next. No idea has ever fulfilled itself in this world except through an ordeal of suffering and sacrifice. . . . . Hence it is evident that nobody can lose through suffering and sacrifice. If he does lose anything of the earth, he will gain much more in return by becoming the heir to a life immortal. This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. Today I must die, so that India may live and may win freedom and glory." Again, towards the end of his letter dated 6-4-1939 addressed to Mahatma Gandhi he says, "It is my firm conviction that a nation can live only if the individuals composing it be ready to die for its sake whenever it is necessary. This moral (or spiritual) *harakiri* is not an easy thing. But may God grant me the strength to face it whenever the country's interests demand it."

(iii) Not only did he love the poor, the humble and the unknown of his country, but he also loved and respected those who did not see eye to eye with him in matters political, for example with regard to the means for attainment of independence of our country. It is well known that his views differed from that of Mahatmaji. Yet he loved and respected Mahatmaji very deeply indeed. Extracts from his letters and speeches quoted below clearly show this.

(a) Extract from statement made in Jharia on 25-3-1939:—

"In conclusion I should like to state clearly that as matters stand today, Mahatma Gandhi alone can lead the Congress out of the present morass and restore unity within our ranks and it is our misfortune that he could not come to Tripuri, otherwise the situation would not have worsened so much."

(b) Extract from letter dated 31-3-39 addressed to Mahatmaji:—

"If for any reason that confidence is shaken—which God forbid—and you are regarded as a partisan, then God help us and the Congress. There is no doubt that there is today a wide gulf between the two main parties or blocks in the Congress. But the gulf can yet be bridged—and that by you."

(c) Extract from a broadcast by Netaji from Singapore on 2-10-43 on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's Birthday Celebrations in S.-E. Asia:—

"I shall devote myself to an estimation of the place of Mahatmaji in the history of India's struggle for independence. The service which Mahatma Gandhi has rendered to India and to the cause of India's freedom is so unique and unparalleled that his name will be written in letters of gold in our national history for all time to come.

"When the last World War was over and Indian leaders began to demand the liberty that had been promised to them, they discovered for the first time that they had been betrayed by perfidious Albion. The reply to their demand came in the form of the Rowlatt Act in 1919, which deprived them of what little liberty they still possessed. And when they protested against that Black Act, the Jallianwallah Bagh massacre followed. For all the sacrifices made by the Indian people during the last World War, the two rewards were the Rowlatt Act and the Jallianwallah Bagh massacre.

"After the tragic events of 1919, Indians were stunned and paralysed for the time being. All the attempts for achieving liberty had been ruthlessly crushed by the British and their armed forces. Constitutional agitation, boycott of British goods, armed revolution, all had alike failed to bring freedom. There was not a ray of hope left, and the Indian people were groping in the dark for a new method and a new weapon of struggle. Just at this psychological moment Gandhiji appeared with his novel method of Non-co-operation or Satyagraha or Civil Disobedience. It appeared as if he had been

sent by Providence to show the path to liberty. Immediately and spontaneously the whole nation rallied round his banner. India was saved. Every Indian's face was now lit up with hope and confidence. Ultimate victory was once again assured.

"For twenty years and more Mahatma Gandhi has worked for India's salvation, and with him the Indian people have worked.

"It is no exaggeration to say that if in 1920 he had not come forward with his new weapon of struggle, India today would perhaps have been still prostrate. His services to the cause of India's freedom are unique and unparalleled. No single man could have achieved more in a single lifetime under similar circumstances. The nearest historical parallel to Mahatma Gandhi is perhaps Mustapha Kemal, who saved Turkey after her defeat in the last World War, and who was then acclaimed by the Turks as 'the Ghazi'.

"Since 1920 the Indians have learnt two things from Mahatma Gandhi, which are the indispensable preconditions for the attainment of independence. They have, first of all, learnt national self-confidence as a result of which revolutionary fervour is now blazing in their hearts. Secondly, they have now got a countrywide organization which reaches the remotest village of India.

"Mahatma Gandhi has firmly planted our feet on the straight road to liberty. He and other leaders are now rotting behind the prison bars. The task that Mahatma Gandhi began has therefore to be accomplished by his countrymen at home and abroad."

(d) Extract from a broadcast message from Rangoon by Netaji to Mahatmaji on 6-7-44:—

"Father of our Nation! In this holy war for India's liberation we ask for your blessings and good wishes."

(iv) Some people have accused him of playing power politics and of being fond of show for himself, but his actions and sacrifices do not justify this accusation. On the contrary, they only show that he has tried always to put first the cause of the people before his own. He could have led a comparatively easy life, and probably would have gained honours as an official in the existing bureaucracy, and even in the Calcutta Corporation if he wanted, but he sacrificed all for the sake of higher considerations of the nation's service. His reply to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's appeal to him to withdraw his resignation as President of

the Indian National Congress at the meeting of the A.I.C.C. in Calcutta on 29th April, 1939, showed clearly that he submitted that resignation after fully exploring all the possibilities for arriving at an honourable settlement had failed. He, therefore, did not want to stand in the way of the country's good. Netaji replied:—

“Serious and critical times are ahead of us. We must pool our resources and pull our whole weight if we are to emerge triumphant out of the external crisis that is fast overtaking us. To this arduous task I shall contribute my humble mite. What does it matter if I am not in the Presidential chair? My services will always be at the disposal of the Congress and the country for what they are worth. I claim to have sufficient patriotism and sufficient sense of discipline to be able to work as an ordinary soldier in this great fight for India's political and economic emancipation.”

He knew how to efface himself for the sake of the country when the occasion arose. Extract from letter dated 31-3-39 addressed to Mahatmaji:—

“All that I want is that you and the Congress should in this critical hour stand up and resume the struggle for Swaraj. If self-effacement will further the national cause, I assure you most solemnly that I am prepared to efface myself completely. I think I love my Country sufficiently to be able to do this.”

(v) His inherent kindness was so great that he repeatedly told the members of his Azad Hind Fauj to leave the ranks if any of them did not feel inclined to fight. He would willingly give them the opportunity to go rather than be compelled to award drastic punishment for their cowardice in the field of battle. In a special Order of the Day on the 13th March, 1945, he said:—

“I am giving a opportunity to all members of the Azad Hind Fauj who may not feel inclined to work dutifully or fight courageously in future to leave the ranks of the Azad Hind Fauj. This offer will be open for one week from the time of its communication.”.....

It was his inherent kindness of heart that sometimes dissuaded him from taking the strictest measures against delinquents and those who deserved harsher punishment.

This was evident with regard to his orders relating to the spies of the British who were captured as well as those who broke the law during the Indian Independence Movement in S.-E. Asia. There is no history of revolution in any country which can claim to have avoided shedding of the blood of one's own countrymen; but with respect to Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, it can be definitely and frankly stated that his hands were not stained with the blood of his own countrymen and were perfectly clean. This is a matter of great pride for all of us who were in the Indian Independence Movement. On the other hand, he was lenient even to those who broke the law.

(vi) That he loved his people, whether civilian or military, intensely and was prepared to undergo the same hardship and suffering as they underwent, was admirably demonstrated during the retreat from Rangoon to Bangkok. He could have easily gone by aeroplane, but he refused and marched long distances along with the troops by night as well as by day. On the lines of march he partook of the same food as they did, slept on the ground as they did, and underwent all the hardships and sufferings which they underwent, and the risks and dangers to which they were exposed. This could only be done when there was intense burning love in one's heart for his own people.

#### *Power of Organization:—*

From his early youth, when he came in contact with people of his age, he showed his power of organization whenever occasion arose. He first demonstrated this when he came in contact with the students in his early college days. Then later, when he took up politics actively, his approach to the students and the formation of their organizations in different parts of India was largely due to his inspiration and initiative.

He had the capacity to find out suitable persons who would be capable of fitting a position creditably. He never created a position to fit a person which is often found in

many organizations and particularly in party politics. He had also the capacity to approach people and make them co-operate with him, even though they differed from him in many matters. The basis of his organizing capacity was his sincerity and his frankness. He would rather quit a place where he did not succeed than try to hang on to it by devious and underground machinations. This is well exemplified in his resigning the Presidentship of the Indian National Congress in April, 1939, after the happenings in the Tripuri Congress meeting. His greatest achievement in organization, which showed his genius in this respect, was his re-organization of the Azad Hind Fauj and of the Indian Independence League in S.-E. Asia. Although he did not undergo regular military training, yet he had picked up a great knowledge of military affairs while he was in Germany. But the situation he was confronted with in S.-E. Asia was wholly different and of a tremendous magnitude as compared to that in Germany relating to the Indian National Army formed there. His re-organization, both of the Azad Hind Fauj and of the Indian Independence League, was successful and satisfied everybody. He achieved this by his capacity (i) to find out (a) suitable persons who would do the necessary work, and (b) items which needed the greatest amount of attention; (ii) to concentrate all his energy and mind when tackling a problem, and (iii) to do hard mental and physical work. He not only issued orders and instructions for the carrying out of a thing, but he took pains to ensure and see that such orders and instructions were actually carried out in time. If there were lapses here and there, the fault did not lie in him, but it was due to the shortcomings of those on whom he relied.

*Political sagacity and farsightedness:—*

(i) He had very carefully analysed the political progress of his country. It was evident to him that the first armed struggle which his countrymen had put up in 1857 failed largely because of the lack of two essential elements.

The first of these was the lack of a central authority or a Provisional Government to co-ordinate the activities of the different leaders of that revolution. The establishment of such a central authority or Provisional Government impresses the enemy far more than when the struggle is carried out by a number of individual leaders. The enemy is likely to pay more respect and consideration to matters arising out of the struggle when he has to deal with a Provisional Government than when he has to deal with individual leaders. Yet another advantage is that a Provisional Government can negotiate with another Government on different matters, such as help for finance, armament, equipment, etc. And if it is recognized by other nations, it still more impresses the enemy against whom the fight for freedom has to be carried out. A still greater advantage is that the recognition of a Provisional Government by other nations gives it an international status, and its struggle for freedom comes out of the field of domestic dispute and passes on to the plane of international politics. Again, with such international recognition of the Provisional Government the spirit of its own people is greatly strengthened and they are impressed more and more with its significance. Further, if at some period of the struggle the forces of the Provisional Government are compelled to withdraw from its territory, it can pass on to another friendly territory from which it can direct its operations, and thus can continue the struggle for a much longer period. So, from every point of view in a struggle for freedom it is essential to form and establish a Provisional Government. The last function of a Provisional Government after the successful achievement of its objects, that is, freedom of its country, would naturally be to help the nation to form and establish a permanent Government of its own choice and hand over to that Government all the functions and powers of the Provisional Government itself. It was in view of these important considerations that our beloved leader Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose conceived the idea of the formation and establishment of the "Arzi

Hukumat-e Azad Hind" (Provisional Government of Free India). It was his realization of the facts mentioned above which made him decide on the establishment of a Provisional Government of Free India out of the Indian Independence Movement in S.-E. Asia after his assumption of leadership. During our struggle for the freedom of our country in S.-E. Asia he consulted us about its formation, established the Provisional Government and formed his first Cabinet on the 21st of October, 1943. This was his master stroke. It showed his sagacity in political matters.

The second reason for the failure of the 1857 Revolt was lack of support of the civilian population to the Army in 1857. Netaji saw this and it was this which impressed upon his mind the absolute necessity of mobilizing the civilian population fully with regard to men, money and material. He felt that unless the Army was supported fully and completely by the civilian population, it could not continue to be a live body and successfully tide over long periods of war. He realised that it would have to be a total mobilization of all resources so that the Army received all the necessary help from the civilian population and rested on a sound foundation. That is why he took such pains, and successfully organized and mobilized the civilian population. Actually 30,000 men were enlisted from the Indian civilian population, but that number could have been easily trebled if the Japanese had been able to find the arms and equipment for them. His appeal for total mobilization was indeed exceedingly successful.

He also saw the great mistake made by our forefathers in throwing away and surrendering their arms and equipment after the Revolution of 1857. If these arms had not been thrown away, the struggle could have been carried on much longer, and the freedom of India brought much nearer; but the surrender of arms reduced the population to abject slavery for a long, long period.

(ii) He studied the re-birth of the freedom movement and its passing through various stages—the stage of mere



discussions and passing of resolutions, the stage of appealing and petitioning, the stage of revolutionary outbursts, though sporadic and localised, the stage of repression and suppression, the stage of non-violent non-co-operation and civil disobedience, the stage of open declaration of India's complete independence in 1929, the stage of round table conferences, the stage of further repression and suppression, incarceration of hundreds of thousands of men and women in British jails, sacrificing of hundreds of lives of Indian martyrs either at the gallows or in front of the firing squads of the police and the military, and finally the nationwide support for the "Quit India" resolution openly declared by the Indian National Congress on the 8th August, 1942. He closely studied all these different stages, and it was evident to him that if the British yielded to any reforms or repealed any tyrannical Acts they only yielded when there was an exhibition of force, as for example in connection with the Partition of Bengal and the Morley-Minto Reforms, the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, etc. It has been said that these things have been coincidental, nevertheless the fact remains that they were so. It is a moot point what would have been the political history of the country had these violent outbursts not occurred. The British did not take kindly to the appeals and petitions. The British politicians of the Tory or die-hard type and the responsible ICS bureaucracy in India either laughed and jeered at these appeals and petitions for granting civil liberties and political advancement, or treated them with utter contempt, and used the most inhuman repressive measures when these appeals and petitions became very vocal and more widespread.

(iii) He felt a great anguish when he saw the insults and degradation heaped on such a noble soul as Mahatma Gandhi who tried his utmost to bring about peacefully the emancipation of his people. It was these observations and a close study of facts which forced him to realise that without a violent struggle either from within or from without, or

both, the British would not yield to the demands of the people. He studied the history of the struggle for independence of countries beyond the borders of India, and nowhere could he find an instance where independence was secure without an armed struggle. To the ruling powers appeals and petitions did not mean much. They appreciated armed strength and violence. In India also, if the British Government had a different outlook, they had ample opportunity for listening to Mahatma Gandhi's appeals and petitions. If the British had listened to appeals and petitions right from the beginning, the political history of India, I am sure, would have been totally different. But they did not. Mahatma Gandhi was incarcerated in British jails time after time. His saintly life, high morals and ethical plane in dealing with matters relating to the nation's welfare meant nothing to them. They ridiculed him and jeered at him.

(iv) Netaji showed his political acumen on many occasions, and events that followed proved his farsightedness and sagacity in political matters. Subhas Chandra Bose in 1928 had appealed to Gandhiji to start a Civil Disobedience Movement, but Mahatma Gandhi had refused. Yet two years later, in 1930, Mahatmaji himself led the Civil Disobedience Movement. One of the remarkable events was his advice to the Congress High Command to allow the formation of coalition ministries in Bengal and Assam on account of the peculiar circumstances prevailing in those two provinces, when the Act of 1935 was introduced. The refusal to accede to his request led to a tremendous deterioration of the political situation in both these provinces, particularly in Bengal. The mistake was realised later, but the mischief had already been done. Yet another instance could be quoted, namely, his request to the Congress High Command in 1939 for giving six months' ultimatum to the British to quit India. This again was not listened to at the time, but the Congress did pass the famous "Quit India" resolution three years later, on August 8, 1942. That the

people were behind the spirit of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was amply manifested in the struggle that ensued after the great leaders were all incarcerated in jail. Again, during the Simla Conference in 1945, Netaji repeatedly broadcast from S.-E. Asia, and appealed to Mahatma Gandhi and other leaders of his country not to accept the proposal and fall into that trap which was nothing but another version of the Cripps proposals of 1942. Another instance of his remarkable political foresight was his advocacy of the necessity of presenting India's case before the world. It was his considered opinion that India could not afford to let her case go by default, particularly when the British were so assiduously propagating information which was anti-Indian. According to Dr. Syed Hussain, such propaganda was very intensive and well-organized in the United States of America, where an enormous amount of money was being spent for the purpose. The world has become much smaller now. There was much more international contact now than before, and therefore it was all the more necessary that India should adopt a definite policy to put her case systematically before the world. No nation, particularly the bigger ones, could now afford to adopt an isolationist policy. It is evident from the experience of the world. The United States of America has given up her former purely negative attitude towards other nations and is actively taking part in world politics which are also shaping the world forces. The USSR has also done the same. She has now definitely given up her former isolationist attitude. The USSR, on the other hand, has taken up a positive line of action and has perfected the technique of propaganda in international affairs. So, as long as we remain a slave nation, it will be all the more to our advantage if we could bring our case to the plane of international politics. It would greatly help our struggle for freedom. But if we deliberately neglect world opinion, we cannot get the advantage of the world forces, moral or material. Now that the United Nations Organization has

been established, the necessity of creating a favourable world opinion towards India is still more evident. The wonderful effect of Srimati Vijaylakshmi Pandit's tour in the United States of America is too well known. It was she who foiled the attempt of the British imperialists to misrepresent India at the San Francisco Conference. A lot more still remains to be done. India is still not free. Even when she is completely independent, she would have to participate in the affairs of the world. She can do so efficiently only if she keeps the world correctly informed about herself. Moreover, we must not imagine that even when we are independent there would be no one trying to undermine us or oppose us. We must not forget that this world does not consist of only saints. Correct information or knowledge is the basis of correct action.

(v) Some people have criticised Netaji for taking foreign help for the liberation of our Motherland. But this is not justified. In the majority of the national struggles for freedom we see in history foreign help had been taken. This seeking of foreign intervention is nothing new. Did not the U.S.A. seek the help of France which contributed so largely to the successful fight of the Americans for freedom from English subjugation? Did not Garibaldi seek the help of the British for the unification and liberation of his country from the yoke of the Austrians? Did not Ireland receive enormous help in the shape of money, armaments, and even men, from U.S.A. in her struggle for freedom from British domination? It is true that from the military point of view the campaign failed in obtaining the objective, but it has achieved some remarkable results which have been mentioned in Chapter XV.

(vi) In spite of what I have said already about Netaji's consistent opposition to the British rulership of India, he was not against the British as individuals, but he was definitely against the British system which governed India. It is true he could not come to a compromise over the independence of India with any British party or Govern-

ment, still that did not mean that he had an inborn hatred of the British as individuals. As a matter of fact, he was essentially a Socialist and an internationalist, and loved to establish as wide contacts as possible with the peoples of all countries. Some persons have accused him of being narrow-minded and a fascist. This is wholly wrong. On the other hand, his acumen and farsightedness to get people to work for him, although they did not see eye to eye with him in many respects, clearly shows his broad-mindedness and open outlook. He repeatedly told us that when there was any difference of opinion it was better that these were dealt with face to face and frankly rather than harbouring grudge and rancour in one's mind. Even if there could not be an open settlement, that did not mean that one should stop social intercourse with those whom he did not agree with, particularly on political grounds, if such social intercourse was needed or desired. It is a fact that in the I.N.A. there were some people who did not wholly see eye to eye with him in all respects, but all worked for him and he never restrained anybody simply on account of difference of opinion. This tolerance and catholic outlook and regard should be an example to us all in India, particularly in Bengal.

Netaji's straightforward and consistent policy with regard to the freedom of the country stands second to none of any other leader in its sincerity, determination, and appeal to the youth of India. His brilliant political acumen and sagacity have proved correct time after time. His patriotism and services to his country will be written in letters of gold in the history of independent India.





Major Gen. A. C. Chatterji—Governor Designate of the  
Liberated Areas and Foreign Minister of Provisional Govt.  
of Azad Hind.

## CHAPTER XVII

### WHY I JOINED THE MOVEMENT

In order to understand the reason for my joining the Movement, it is essential first to have an understanding of the background of the previous part of my life.

I was born and brought up in Lahore, the capital of the Punjab. Every year—sometimes twice a year—we used to come down to Bengal and we used to visit our maternal uncle's place at Kanchrapara. From early boyhood the devastation caused by malaria in that town greatly impressed my mind. I was told that there was a time when that town once contained nearly 40,000 inhabitants, whereas one could hardly find even 4,000 during my boyhood. Huge buildings were lying vacant, many of them—due to being unoccupied—had become covered with vegetation. Many had crumbled down. The whole place was overgrown with jungles and it was said that in winter one could sometimes shoot a leopard within the precincts of the town. The people were pale-looking, thin, and with enlarged spleens; the children, instead of being active and sprightly, were sluggish with vacant-looking eyes, pot-bellied, and with large heads. The extremely poor physique and bad health of the people of Bengal struck my youthful mind very impressively. In contrast with this stood out the healthy, strong and vigorous body of the people of the Punjab. As a matter of fact, as one travelled from Lahore to Calcutta, one could see the difference in the physique of the people as one passed from that province towards Bengal where the physical condition of the people was the poorest. I began to ask myself if something could not be done to stop the devastation caused by malaria, and for the improvement of the health of the people of Bengal. Whenever any opportunity occurred, I listened to the talks of the



older people regarding the devastation caused by malaria in Burdwan, Murshidabad, Jessore and other places. As I grew older, the miserable and heart-rending conditions, both economic as well as physical, of the people of Bengal went deeper and deeper into my mind. I decided that I would serve the people and do all I could to improve the conditions, but I could not decide what would be the best way to do this. I was still in my early teens when I made up my mind that I should take up the profession of medicine in order to carry out the work which I intended to take up. From that time onwards, I had no other ambition but of becoming a medical man. Still I was not quite sure what would be the best way to achieve the object as a doctor, that is, whether I should be a general practitioner or take up service, and if the latter, what service. When I was in the Entrance class, an officer of the Indian Medical Service came to our house in Lahore. He was on sick leave and was suffering from rheumatism. From him I heard about the Indian Medical Service and was impressed by its glamour. After listening to him for some time, I made up my mind that I should become an officer of the I.M.S. as that would be most helpful for me to achieve my ambition. There was a time when a strong temptation came to me to take up agricultural work in the landed property we then had in the Punjab, but I resisted and stuck to my original decision, and ultimately came into the I.M.S. during the First World War. From the experience that I gained during the War and in the Army, I was convinced that prevention was better than cure. One of the things of which I may be legitimately proud was my effort as a Regimental Medical Officer in the Egyptian Expeditionary Force in that War to keep at the disposal of my Commanding Officer the largest number of physically fit men at all times. Malaria was a problem in Palestine, and I took the greatest care to keep the incidence as low as possible, with the result that my Battalion had the fewest sufferers from malaria in the whole Division—the 53rd Welsh Division. For this, the

A.D.M.S. was highly pleased and congratulated me and as a sequence he recommended me for promotion. From then onwards, I applied myself constantly to equip myself with as much knowledge and experience for the prevention of disease, particularly malaria—as I could, and for this purpose, apart from the experience that I gained subsequently in the Army as well as on the civil side, I went to England, Germany and America.

While in Palestine, after the First World War, I got the first shock of my life so far as British justice was concerned. I received orders appointing me as a permanent officer of the I.M.S. I was not even called for an interview. I was very happy. But after a couple of months, I received some more papers stating the scales of pay and allowances, and they showed glaring discrimination between Indians and Europeans. The difference was so great that what I, as an Indian officer, would get after serving 15 years, a European officer would get after serving only about 7 years. I could not accept such conditions, because (i) I felt that there was no reason why for the same work done, people should get different rates of pay; (ii) I was not warned beforehand that such discrimination would be made. I therefore submitted my resignation, and asked to be relieved of the service and sent back to India. My A.D.M.S. entirely agreed with me and appreciated my objection that I should have been warned beforehand, at the time when my application for a permanent Commission was entertained by the authorities nearly two years ago, that there would be discrimination between Indians and Europeans. I was sent back to India in command of two Field Ambulances. On reaching India, I had an interview with the Director-General of Indian Medical Service, and he could not deny the force of my argument that either I should have been warned before I was given a permanent Commission, or I must be given equal terms with the Europeans. He told me that I should withdraw my resignation, and he would see to it that I got what I had asked for. Ultimately I achieved my

point. This happened in 1920. Nevertheless, it left in my mind a bad impression as to why should there be (i) discrimination between Indians and Europeans for the same amount and the same type of work done by both; (ii) why one must fight with the Government for one's rights. Those who were at the helm of affairs in the Government must have the sense of fairness in their mind to deal with those who serve under them. It is not helpful for the development of good order and discipline and better relationships between the Government and the people—particularly a Government which is alien—if the people have to demand and fight for their rights. Unfortunately, the British have never realised that as a Government they ought to be magnanimous and give a lead to the people rather than be goaded by them and made to yield concessions.

I still believed that the best way for the improvement of the health of the people lay in close co-operation between Government and the people, and the Imperial services were in a position to do a lot in this connection. Unfortunately, as far as actual conditions went, it was not so. The Indian Civil Service were in a marvellous position to give a correct lead to the people when the Reforms of 1919 were introduced. But instead of integrating the people and helping in their development, they did all they could to promote disunity amongst them and hamper their progress.

I had applied to the D.G., IMS, for an appointment in Preventive Medicine in the Civil Cadre, specially in Bengal. In 1927 I was transferred to Bengal on the civil side and appointed Police Surgeon in Calcutta, and later as Civil Surgeon in other places. I must have gone over the heads of at least a dozen men who had better qualifications as surgeon than myself. But evidently such qualifications were not taken into account, otherwise one could not understand how this could have happened, unless of course it was inefficiency in the D.G., I.M.S.'s office. I saw the Surgeon-General of Bengal and spoke to him regarding the

work that I wanted. I told him that I was prepared to wait for some time—two or three years if necessary—but I would like to take up ultimately work on the preventive side. As a junior officer I was earning a fair amount of money, but it did not appeal to me. The Surgeon-General rebuked me and said, "I am giving you a prize post (he referred to the post of Police Surgeon), why don't you stick to it?" I said money exactly did not appeal to me and that I wanted to serve the province in the best way I could, and that I was more concerned with the preventive side of the problem than merely curing the people of their disease in a half-hearted way, for the provision of dispensaries and hospitals for the whole province was wholly insufficient. I told him that if there was no chance of my taking up preventive work, that is, going into the Public Health Department of the province, I would prefer to go back to the Army, which I ultimately did. However, in 1936, the opportunity that I was looking for came. I was selected for the post of Director of Public Health, and was appointed to that post in May of that year. I tried to serve the province in my humble way. But I had to face great obstructions to the constructive proposals that I submitted. Yet when I was asked to prepare a 10-year programme for the province for Public Health work, the Hon'ble Minister in charge of my Department was congratulated on his programme of work being the best that was submitted to the Cabinet.

I had to fight many battles. I may quote here one example : I wanted to improve the conditions of the Nursing service and with that point in view, when matters came up in the Nursing Council, I represented that more and more Indian girls and women should be taken into the service; but I was always told that Indians did not like to come into the Nursing service, particularly women of the better class. I repeatedly pointed out that it was not true that better-class Indians did not like to take up the profession, but the reason that they did not want to join at present was because the existing conditions in the service were adverse to them.

First, the standard of basic qualification was kept so low that only girls of very low class Indians came in, with whom girls of the better class would not like to associate. Secondly, during the training period, and even later, there was discrimination between Indians and Anglo-Indians and Europeans. Their accommodation was separate, their food was separate, their treatment was different. I repeatedly said in the Nursing Council, which was presided over by the Surgeon-General, that these conditions must be removed if they wanted to attract the better type of Indian girls, and I insisted that Matriculation should be the minimum standard for the basic educational qualification. After a great deal of argument it was ultimately agreed to, but as a special case, for the first year. That very first year there was appreciable response from better-class Indian girls for admission as nurses in the Calcutta Medical College. This proved my argument. Here, again, what I did not understand was why those who were in power—the Surgeon-General as well as the Chief Matrons who were Europeans—could not be sincere in their proposals; why they did not have a broader outlook; why they could not treat Indians and Europeans on the same basis; why they could not help the Indians to reach a higher standard if they lagged, and not try to adopt subtle measures by which their progress and improvement would be hampered. They should have had intelligence enough to use their discretion in the right way, or they should not be in positions of power from where they could do a lot of harm. I am sure they have intelligence enough to judge what would be to the best interests of the country, but unfortunately they are not sincere enough to put it into practice themselves unless goaded by somebody else. Another example may be given : I wanted to lay the foundation for the combination of the Preventive and Curative Departments and for that I had urged for a start to be made in the primary units—those in the rural areas. It was at the end opposed by the Surgeon-General. And yet his post was the one that was

recommended to be abolished and his Department combined with that of the Director of Public Health by the Provincial Retrenchment Committee. I have now been vindicated by the report of the Bhore Committee appointed by the Government of India.

The second shock I received was after the submission of my report on the growing of cinchona plants and the manufacture, distribution and sale of quinine in India. I went to Java in 1937 as a Reporter to the Government of India of the Rural Hygiene Conference of the Far Eastern Countries and brought back sufficient information regarding the production and manufacture of quinine there and an offer of a ten-year contract for the supply of quinine from the Director of the Kina-Bureau. It was officially reported to the Government that the method of production and manufacture of quinine in the comparatively small plantations in India were old and obsolete and that it should be replaced by modern methods of cross-breeding of the two varieties of quinine-producing plants (*Cinchona Rubra* and *Cinchona Ledgeriana*) and better manufacturing methods as adopted by the Dutch in Java. As a result of very uncomfortable and searching questions put by some members of the Board of Public Health at the Annual Conference, the Government yielded so far as to appoint a committee to go into the matter and it was found even by the English investigator that there were thousands of acres of land available in India for quinine plantation. It was during this conference that the D.G., I.M.S., told me "Chatterji, why are you bothering about quinine? We have done down the Dutch on the question of sugar, let us not do them down in quinine." This was shocking indeed. It clearly showed the callousness of the authorities in power to the interests of India.

A beginning was just going to be made as an experiment in connection with my proposal for providing a Health Unit—a combination of Preventive and Curative work—for every two Union Boards in the Subdivision of Serampore

in the district of Hooghly when I was recalled to the Army. The Hon'ble Minister in charge of my Department, and the then Chief Minister, Mr. Fazlul Huq, had tried their best to keep me in the province but the D.G., I.M.S., came down to Calcutta and forced the then Governor to induce my Minister to relieve me of my work so that I could be taken away for service in the Army. A special Cabinet meeting was held where the Governor presided, in which the Chief Minister thanked me for the work that I had done and said that a lien would be left on the post for me so that I could take up the work as soon as I returned from the War. It hurt me greatly that I should be called away from the work which was the ambition of my life. I was being sent back to the Army when I was nearing 50 years of age, while there were at least half-a-dozen Englishmen several years junior to me who were maintained in the Civil side of the I.M.S. in the province. It was not that I was not doing any war work. I was greatly interested in Air Raid Precaution work and was doing whatever was given to me. I recommended the sinking of tubewells in Calcutta to provide for an alternative water supply in case of aerial bombing. Not only this, it also pained me to consider that the D.G., I.M.S., considered the Inspector-General of Prisons to be a more important appointment than the Director of Public Health for that officer could not be spared for Army service. This showed the angle of vision of the British rulers in India regarding welfare of the people of the country. Prison administration to them was more important than the administration of Public Health in a province where barely 10 per cent of the population is physically fit. However much I felt in my mind, I never protested, because I did not want it to be said that I shirked going to war. I had left the decision in the matter in the hands of the Government. It was up to them to make a fair decision.

Ultimately I was ordered to Meerut to mobilise the 40th Indian General Hospital consisting of 1,000 beds, and we did it in the shortest possible time. Our actual working

days for mobilising the unit were less than a fortnight. At the time of the mobilisation of the unit we had been issued warm clothing and the camouflage of our motor vehicles indicated that we were meant for desert warfare in colder regions, probably the Middle East, but two or three days before entraining at Meerut, the warm clothing was withdrawn and the camouflage of the vehicles was changed, which indicated jungle warfare. Before I left, I wrote to the Army Headquarters, Medical Branch, that the Medical Branch had grown up sufficiently largely and had diversity in its organisation, and that its diversity of activities justified that it should be recognised as a separate Branch in itself just as the Quartermaster's Branch. That would lead to smoother and more expeditious work and would increase the efficiency of the organisation.

I embarked with my unit at Bombay on board the ship "Empress of Japan" on the 16th January, 1942. We had 5,000 Indian troops on board ship in addition. We sailed out to the outer harbour and remained there till the full convoy was formed and then sailed on the 19th January for an unknown destination. Our convoy was escorted by destroyers and cruisers. When we came near Sumatra, air force protection was given to the convoy as it was feared that Japanese raiders and submarines might be operating in the area. The aerial protection was continued till we passed through the Straits of Sunda. Then we turned northwards and when our convoy was passing through the Straits of Banks, two Japanese planes were sighted which were flying very high. Immediately anti-aircraft guns of the convoy, which were of an antiquated pattern, came into operation. One of the aeroplanes dropped a bomb which fell only a few feet away from the bow of the "Empress of Japan". A large spout of water was thrown up but the ship did not sustain any damage. The formation of the convoy then broke up and the ships scattered in all directions. My ship, carrying all the Indian troops, as well as the two large American ships which formed part of the



convoy and carried 10,000 British troops between them, were quite fast in their speed. All the three speeded up and went far ahead of the remaining ships of the convoy except for some of the destroyers and cruisers which were well in front. My ship reached Singapore harbour just before dawn on the 29th of January, 1942. As soon as I arrived, I reported to Brigadier Stringer, the Deputy-Director of Medical Services, Malaya Command, at Fort Canning. He was rather surprised and said that he had a sufficient number of hospitals and medical officers and did not need any more. This gave me a shock because I had been wrenched away from a work that was my life's ambition. I said, "Couldn't a telegram be sent in time so that I could have been diverted to another theatre of war?" I did not get a reply. I was told there was no site selected for the hospital and that for the present I was to disembark immediately. All equipment and the men of my unit were accommodated in a building in Raffles Square, which had already been bombed. The men commenced unloading at once and worked hard to get down all the equipment. Two days after commencing the disembarkation we were told to remove the equipment from the wharf to a school building in a lane off Orchard Road in the city and try to open there as large a number of beds as possible.

We had barely removed a part of the equipment to the school building and were just considering the opening of beds in the hospital, when I received orders to reconnoitre another site for establishing the hospital. This was the Mental Hospital on Yeo Chikiang Road. I inspected the site and reported that so far as accommodation was concerned, it was very satisfactory. But it was under shell-fire of the Japanese, and guns of the British Army were located much too near the hospital. I was told that was the only place available and I had to take it.

Unloading was still going when I suddenly discovered on the morning of the 4th February that the ship had left the dock and was not to be found in the harbour. We had been

able to take out everything except the medical and surgical equipment. The ship had left us without any warning. I reported the matter at once to Brigadier Stringer. On hearing this, he was very much surprised and was completely at a loss to understand how it had happened. After two days he was able to ascertain from the Quartermaster General's Branch that the ship had left port with European women and children evacuees. This showed confusion and lack of co-ordination at the Headquarters. However, the D.D.M.S. assured me that he would do all in getting together medical and surgical equipment for my hospital that was possible under the circumstances. After some time he did provide what he could and it was supplemented by the medical and surgical equipment from the Mental Hospital. But it was not adequate. The removal of equipment from the school was begun and the personnel were moved from Raffles Square to the Mental Hospital. By working hard and in shifts we were able to lay out 600 beds within three days. During this period the hospital was under bombardment from time to time. The first bombardment hit the Officers' Mess where large splinters pierced the staircase and the walls of the dining room and bedrooms occupied by the officers. Simultaneously a few shells fell in the hospital compound. The matter was reported to Malaya Command, and the next day some more shells fell into the hospital. After a couple of days there was still more severe bombardment of the hospital. Several wards were hit; several shell-holes appeared in the open spaces between the wards. That day, at about 9 in the morning, I was coming to the hospital. Suddenly a shell burst about twelve yards from me. I felt as if I was pushed by a powerful force and fell into a drain close by; I was not hurt. But my orderly who was immediately behind me received minor splinter injuries. As this bombardment was rather severe the matter was again reported to Malaya Command. After a few hours, orders were received for immediate evacuation of the premises leaving behind all

heavy equipment. In accordance with the instructions received, we had to leave behind all furniture, tents, mattresses etc. I immediately saw the D.D.M.S., Malaya Command, and asked him if he could not allot accommodation for my hospital in a more permanent place so that I could really establish the hospital and start functioning. I asked him why he could not appreciate the military situation more accurately so that he could issue necessary orders for establishing the hospital in a more suitable place instead of having it moved from place to place; as it happened, there were three moves between the 1st and the 10th of February. To move a thousand-bedded General Hospital in such a way and lose a large part of the equipment could hardly be called satisfactory. He expressed regret and said that he was sorry that the hospital was being chivvied about from place to place. He said that his department was under the Quartermaster-General's Branch, and they never communicated to him their appreciation of the situation, and so he was at a loss to find out how the battle conditions were progressing. After this it was futile to request him for anything about this matter. It was evident that the confusion at the Headquarters of the Malaya Command was very great. But this statement of the D.D.M.S. confirmed the view which I had submitted to the Adjutant-General, Army Headquarters in India, before I left Meerut on his asking for suggestions, that the Medical Branch of the Army should be made an independent Branch by itself and not kept any longer as subordinate to any other Branch. The Medical Branch had developed sufficiently largely and specialisation was increasing. Subordinating it to another branch led to confusion, delay and inefficiency.

We were then ordered to Tyresall Park and we moved there during the afternoon of 10th and the morning of the 11th February. On the morning of the 11th, there was terrific aerial bombardment of that area by Japanese planes and the whole of the 12th Indian General Hospital was

burnt to ashes. A large number of patients were rescued but it was reported that over 150 patients were missing. The majority of these, along with almost all the serious cases, were burnt to death. This bombardment was not a surprise because the Japanese had repeatedly thrown leaflets warning us of the consequence of stationing British troops (Argylo) in close proximity to the hospital buildings. Maj.-Gen. S. C. Alagappan (then Lt.-Col.), who was then the Officer Commanding of the 12th Indian General Hospital, had brought the matter to the notice of the authorities concerned and urged removal of the troops. But his appeal was ignored. By this bombardment and the resultant fire that broke out, I myself and some other officers and men of my unit lost whatever belongings we had. But luckily none of the hospital equipment was burnt or damaged. Soon after the aerial bombardment shell and machinegun fire and rifle shots were heard. All this occurred at about 12 noon. Our telephonic communications had broken down. I asked for volunteers for contacting Malaya Command at Fort Canning which was about three and a half miles away and getting instructions from there. My second in command—Maj. White—volunteered to go to the Headquarters of Malaya Command. I waited for him till late in the afternoon but he did not come back. Telephone communications had been restored by then, and I got in touch with Malaya Command and received instructions to evacuate the barracks in Tyersall Park immediately, leaving all the equipment there. We were told to go to the Raffles Institute near the sea-beach. This was very tragic, for how could a hospital function without any equipment? The place was evacuated that evening and whatever could be carried away in a few lorries was taken to the Raffles Institute. For the night we lay on the grass in the open. The next morning (12th February) the buildings were occupied and efforts were made to lay down as many beds as possible. Whatever mattresses we had were laid on the floor for the patients and so also the stretchers. Only a few beds were available.

These were reserved for serious cases. As we were very short of blankets, mattresses, and other equipment, I decided to retrieve as many as possible from the barracks in Tyresall Park. I called for volunteers and arranged for transport. Work could only be done at night as the area was under observation of the enemy and was subject to heavy fire. We worked for two consecutive nights. It would have been possible to retrieve some more equipment, but on the second night the Officer Commanding the battalion defending this area objected to the noise produced by the lorries, as it drew the enemy's fire to his defences. So I had to give up further attempts and thus lost a great deal more of the equipment.

Casualties began to pour into our Hospital from the 13th February; as also people suffering from fever and dysentery. Three operation tables were put up and the surgeons and medical officers worked day and night for three consecutive days—13th, 14th and 15th. Their teamwork was excellent and they did their best, especially Capt. Allinson, I.M.S., and Lt. Nandi, I.M.S.

On the afternoon of the 16th, a fresh danger appeared. Suddenly a large ammunition dump in the grounds on the opposite side of the road in front of the hospital was blown up by the British in order to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Japanese. There were several armoured cars parked on the near side of Beach Road in front of the hospital. These caught fire and the imminent danger of the fire spreading to the hospital became very great. Parties of volunteers were organised to extinguish the fire while the ammunition was blowing up. A few large splinters from bursting shells landed on the roof of the hospital buildings as well as in the compound and two of the men were hit. One of them, who was standing close by me, had part of his head blown off and was killed instantaneously. It was dangerous work on the part of the volunteers, but it was successfully done, and I was extremely thankful to all officers and men who helped in the work. I went imme-

diately after the surrender of Singapore, and saw Brig. Stringer, who was the D.D.M.S. of Malaya Command. I requested him to take steps to take me out on parole from the Japanese authorities and send me away to another theatre of war. He just looked at me and said nothing.

After a few days I was called by Brig. Stringer, the D.D.M.S., for a conference at Raffles Place immediately behind Fullerton Buildings where his office had been shifted from Fort Canning. In Fullerton Buildings was also located one of the main British hospitals. On my arrival I found the D.D.M.S. and some of the British officers standing on the road between Fullerton Buildings and Whiteaway Laidlaw's premises. There was one Japanese officer (Lt. Nakamya) in the group. On my arrival the D.D.M.S. told me that the Indian troops would be moved to Neessoon Barracks immediately and that I, too, had to move my hospital there. When I heard about the removal of the Indian prisoners of war and of my hospital to this area, I told the D.D.M.S. that as I did not know the area myself I would very much like to go and see it first to make sure that proper arrangement for water and sanitation existed there. For if we did not take care of these items beforehand, there was every danger of outbreaks of epidemics, particularly dysentery. On hearing this, the Japanese officer, who evidently understood English, struck me on the chest and said that the troops would be moved and that I would have to go at once whether the arrangements there were satisfactory or not. I protested and appealed to Brig. Stringer, he being the head of the Medical Department, to intervene and not to agree to send the troops without ensuring proper water supply and sanitary arrangements. But he remained dumb and did not open his lips. Evidently he was mortally afraid. We were given peremptory orders to move.

While we were in Neessoon, the question arose of the Indian Independence Movement and the formation of the I.N.A. The matter was extremely serious and of the utmost

importance. We had to think very deeply as we had come to the crossroads of our lives and had to make a clear division. I thought over the matter for days and nights, and as I did so, the whole picture of my past life and the important events in India's struggle for freedom repeatedly came to my mind. It was not only a personal question but also one of future welfare of 60,000 officers and men which one must take into consideration in coming to a decision in matters like this. The first thing that came to my mind was the shamefaced manner in which the British had treated us at the fall of Singapore. We had been handed over to the Japanese like goods and chattel. Up till then I had served in the I.M.S. for nearly a quarter of a century and was the seniormost Indian officer at the time in Singapore, and yet the British did not have even the courtesy or decency to consult me as to what should be done with regard to the Indians in the circumstances. That meant that in a tight corner there was no question of fellowship and that the British would sacrifice the Indians without the slightest compunction or hesitation. The next point that arose in my mind was the deliberate policy of discrimination that was followed in the Services. Discrimination as to pay and allowances, discrimination as to appointments, discrimination as to promotions, was evident everywhere. Thirdly, the British Government, instead of giving a helping hand to the Indians in their onward march to progress and independence, ruthlessly suppressed them whenever an opportunity arose. The Jallianwala Bagh massacre of April, 1919, no Indian could ever forget. Repeated imprisonment of Mahatma Gandhi, Moulana Abul Kalam Azad, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and hundreds of other leaders—men and women—could never be forgotten by Indians. Fourthly, the consistent lack of sincerity of the British regarding Indians greatly disillusioned my mind. The deliberate British policy of *divide et impera*, as evinced by the disruption of joint electorate, however limited in scope it was, and its substitution by separate electorate, was

too patent. The remarks of the D.G., I.M.S., regarding not doing down the Dutch with reference to the production of quinine in India was, to say the least, the most dishonest regarding improvement of the health of our people. Nor could I forget the utterance of the Finance Secretary of the Bengal Government, when we were travelling together to attend the Durbar at Dacca, on board the steamer plying on the Ganges, why I bothered so much about the health of the people of Bengal, and that I should on the other hand let a third of the population die out as the province was overpopulated. He might have made this remark if any real attempt that had been made and had failed to improve their health. Nothing worth the name has been done so far. His utterance only showed his inner nature and complete lack of sympathy for the suffering people.

The deliberate manipulations of the British Government in India with regard to technical teaching and training of Indians came to my mind repeatedly. They never took the trouble of providing adequate facilities for such training. Why should young Indians be forced in the circumstances to proceed abroad to get such training? Such facilities should be provided within the country by any Government which feels for the interest and welfare of its own people. We lose every year crores of rupees on this account. One could understand post-graduate training of a few selected persons outside one's own country. But the conditions for admission into the higher services and promotion of those who are already there are manipulated in such a way that one has to proceed abroad and spend thousands of its poor economic resources. Further, the question of manipulated currency and exchange was evident to anyone who took interest in the economic condition of India. Why must the rupee exchange be determined by the Secretary of State or why should the rupee be tacked on to sterling? As a result of this, even today Indians cannot obtain dollar freely. The Indian rupee must go through sterling in London to reach the dollar of Washington. The deliberate attempt of



the British Government to keep Indians illiterate and ignorant, as evinced by the vetoing of the proposal of the Members of the Imperial Legislative Council in 1915 for introducing compulsory free primary education was not only astounding but clearly showed the presence of the cloven hoof in the British administrative policy in India. Such very significant points clearly proved the complete lack of sincerity in the minds of the British administrators in India and it was this lack of sincerity and of sense of fellowship which greatly influenced my mind in coming to the decision that I should join the Movement. I was essentially a believer in evolution and it was this dominant feeling and my intense desire to do constructive work for the improvement of the health of the people of Bengal which enabled me to control myself during my career in the Service, but when I was snatched away from the work which was the ambition of my life, the bond that tied me to the work was snapped and the niggardly treatment that I received at the time of the fall of Singapore put the lid on my feelings of evolution. When one experiences a deliberate and determined opposition to the evolutionary processes there is no other alternative to it except revolution. It has to be adopted. With the inauguration of the Indian Independence Movement and the formation of the Indian National Army, the spirit of revolution rose in my mind. I made up my mind that if the Japanese wanted to go into our country, I must go with them with an organised body of our own, if possible, otherwise alone, if necessary. I was determined not to stay behind and rot in a Japanese prison. I carefully weighed the pros and cons of the Movement. If it succeeded, the problem of India would be solved. If it did not, then it would have made a material contribution towards the struggle for achievement of freedom of our country. If the Japanese betrayed their promise after entering India, we would be in a position to organise our people and throw them out. I thought that if the Japanese went into our country, which they had avowed they would whether

Indians joined the Movement or not, I thought it my duty to go into the country even alone so that I would be in a position to minimise the havoc and devastation to life and property and the dishonour of women that usually take place when war enters a country, and if I could save the life of a single fellow countryman, or save the honour of one single Indian woman even at the expense of my own life, it would be worth it. Later, I was convinced that if we went on an organised basis—first as the I.N.A. and secondly as the Provisional Government of Free India and the Azad Hind Fauj, we would be in a far better position to help our own people in obtaining freedom for our country and at the same time to check the Japanese if they tried to break their word and became treacherous. Still I thought it advisable to consult Maj.-Gen. Loganadan and Maj.-Gen. Allagappan in the matter. We consulted each other, discussed the various aspects of the problem and ultimately came to the conclusion that we must now take a bold step and join the Movement wholeheartedly. It was not that I did not realise the possibility of the defeat of Japan because of her limited resources as compared to those of the Anglo-American Powers. Still I was convinced that the attempt that we were going to make would be worth while in the struggle for freedom of India. Thousands of people of our country had been thrown into prison by the British for the struggle for freedom of the motherland; thousands had been killed by British bullets and lathi charges and by being hanged on the gallows. We would be doing no more than what they had attempted in another way. On the other hand there were very cogent reasons as to why we must have joined the Movement.

The arrival of Netaji on the scene of action, his power of organisation, his capacity to work with people of different shades of opinion, his personality, his formation of the Provisional Government of Free India, and above all, his intense and uncompromising attitude regarding the complete independence of our Motherland, enormously strengthened our resolve to struggle for the freedom of our country.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### THE STRUGGLE SHALL CONTINUE TILL COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE IS ACHIEVED

It is true that from the military point of view the campaign of the Provisional Government of Free India has failed for the present to achieve the object. But that does not mean that our struggle has ended. It is true that the British are trying their best to crush the members of the Azad Hind Fauj and of Azad Hind Dal. A high-ranking Public Relations Officer in New Delhi said to an Indian that the British would do their utmost to crush the members of the Azad Hind Fauj and see that they starved on the streets of India. It is true that secret instructions have been issued by the Chief Secretary of the province of the Punjab for not giving any employment to the members of the Azad Hind Fauj inspite of the fact that the Government have declared publicly that they are no longer under a ban except for employment in security services. Still we do not admit defeat. When I was in the prison hospital in Delhi, Mahatma Gandhi kindly came to see us there. While we were having a talk with him, he said to me very politely that we were a military organization and had suffered defeat. I replied to Mahatmaji that militarily we might not have achieved the object for which we fought, but we did not admit that we were defeated for the following reasons : (1) The spirit of the people, after they have heard of what we have done, has been tremendously roused. (2) They have wholeheartedly supported us everywhere. If we had not received this support and sympathy, then that would have been a real defeat for us. I further said that in a way I was not sorry for what had happened. Individually we might have suffered very great loss, but from the point of view of the country, there was one great

saving feature. Without bringing actual war deep into our country, we had been instrumental in rousing the spirit of the people, and yet the country has been saved from the devastation of life and property and the dishonour of our women which are inevitable concomitants of war in any country. Mahatmaji agreed with me.

To-day the spirit of Netaji and the Azad Hind Fauj, instead of limiting itself within the band of people who followed Netaji, has spread far and wide into the country. One hears *Jai Hind* everywhere. People are today ready to pay the price for the freedom of their country in blood, life and property.

Too much is being made by the Britishers of the communal disharmony that one may notice here and there. These conflicts are really neither communal nor religious in the least. They are the signs of travail of the people in achieving independence from foreign domination. These conflicts are really conflicts between national and anti-national forces. The Muslim League adherents are to-day allowing themselves to be manipulated by the British intriguers, but I am convinced that the day is not far off when reason will prevail and the machinations of the British Imperialists will appear to them in their true perspective.

Yet other examples of Britain's lack of sincerity about India have become patent lately. Britain voted in the U.N.O. Assembly against India's demand for justice in the matter of racial discrimination that is being shown against her sons and daughters in South Africa. She supported the European settlers and the Government of Kenya in their racial discrimination against the Indians there. Britain has voted in the U.N.O. against India's membership of the Security Council. Why should Indians trust her?

I am not an apostle of hatred. How can I forget the work done and active sympathy shown for India by Hume, Wedderburn, Annie Besant, Margaret Noble, Sir Henry Cotton, C. F. Andrews, Lord Carmichael and Nellie Sen

Gupta? But we must never forget that these men and women did what they could in their individual capacity, and that they were disliked and definitely opposed by the British administrative system. It is that system that urgently needed removal lock, stock and barrel. For it was harmful and at the same time so powerful that it could not be defied by intellectual Liberals like Lord Morley or Labourites like Prof. Laski, Sorensen, Pethick-Lawrence or Attlee. The first-named yielded to the insistence of Lord Minto, the then Viceroy, on the introduction of separate electorates, the one cause for the growth of misunderstandings between Hindus and Muslims. That process still continues. The two last-named had been yielding point after point to Lord Wavell's schemes to prolong the agony of India. There is one thing we must not forget in this connection. The so-called 'men on the spot' are the guardians of the British Empire. Every Britisher likes to perpetuate his Empire in India. Apart from any sentimental reason there is the very solid reason that every fifth man in Great Britain obtains his bread and butter from India—though tens of millions of Indians may starve. Therefore, by trusting in or yielding to the 'men on the spot' in the suppression of Indians, the men in power in England ensure the bread and butter of their kith and kin. Further, these 'men on the spot' naturally must fight to the last ditch and oppose Indian aspirations or in any case delay as long as possible the day of reckoning, for their own bread and butter depends upon the continuance of British Imperialism in India. That is why this imperialism must go lock, stock and barrel. A free India may yet be a friend of Britain, but that would largely depend on how gracefully Britain liquidates her imperialism in this country. The bitterer or longer the struggle for liberation, the less the chances of India remaining her friend, and still less so if India has to seek foreign intervention. I am not against the individual Britisher. I still look forward to the day when the present turmoil and distrust will pass away and peace and friend-

ship will prevail, but that can only be between a free Indian and a free Briton.

We Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians are sons of this soil. Our destinies are linked together for good or evil. We are born here, have to work in this land of ours and, when we die, our bodies will mingle with the dust of our beloved motherland. We have all got to struggle for the achievement of freedom of our country. If one of us is misled, freedom may be delayed a little, but come it must. We must be true to our past genius. Our civilisation has grown through the process of synthesis and not analysis. What we are to-day and what we shall be to-morrow must combine the contributions of all who live in this motherland of ours—Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, Jains, Buddhists and Zoroastrians. To-day one has only to look about and see the spirit. Even many of the Nawabs, Rajas and Maharajas are talking of giving freedom to their subjects. Many of the Muslim title-holders have renounced their titles. The Army, the Navy, and the Air Force are not the same as they were before the War. They have given ample evidence that their outlook and spirit have changed. They have not yet been in a position to express themselves freely, but I am sure when the time comes they shall serve the nation and help in the attainment of its final goal—the complete emancipation of India from foreign domination—just as much as those who were in the Azad Hind Fauj. High-ranking Indian officials in the Civil Departments also say *Jai Hind* and have the same burning desire for the independence of the country. To-day the struggle is no longer confined to any particular society or organisation. The whole of India is alive to the situation and is trying to grapple with the problem. Not only are our people now wide awake, the world forces, too, are in our favour. The nations of the world now realise that as long as India remains enslaved, the peace of the world is in danger. New world powers have arisen and we have friends amongst them. I am sure when the time comes we will have their active sympathy. Pandit

Jawaharlal Nehru, Vice-President of the Interim Government, has openly declared for the formation of an Indian Republic. He cannot recede from that position. No leader who tries to stem the tide of popular upsurge for freedom can hold his own. He will be swept away with the tide. I think the time is not far off when a mass movement will develop and sweep the country from Khyber to Kohima and from Kashmir to Cape Comorin. One more concerted and gigantic stride we have to make in our final struggle, and success will be ours. To quote Netaji's words : "*India shall be Free—and before long.*"

*Inquilab Zindabad, Azad Hind Zindabad, Netaji Zindabad.*

JAI HIND.

# ERRATA

Page	Line	Incorrect	Correct
11	22	in the	with
"	"	navy	naval
22	9	other	others
27	29	not be	not to be
55	8	all out-aid	all-out aid
"	23	Col. Ivacuro,	Col. Iwakuro,
"	24	Ivacuro Kikan,	Iwakuro Kikan,
68	28	it is midsummer	it is not midsummer
69	8	is only	will only be
71	4	continually	continuously
74	9	innermost	innermost recess
75	3	enemy	enemy
78	3	1917	1921
84	18	<i>imaki</i>	<i>imanki</i>
88	1	others	other
96	27	up a	up to a
"	28	live off	live on
"	29	were operating.	would be operating.
98	35	stokes	spokes
99	4, 10, 16	stokes	spokes
100	3	paid to	paid even to
"	18	put up	putting up of
101	7	common on	common man in
"	14	larger	large
"	34	as many	many
103	37	They	These
106	29	Baba Ajit Singh of <i>Kamagata Maru</i> fame	Sardar Ajit Singh
107	34	the differences	their differences
112	36	experience	memory
114	29	thye	they
117	31	hefy	hefty
119	20	on	in
"	21	by any by	by and by



<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
128	5	shone.	showed.
136	13	countryman	countrymen
139	26	Government	Governments
145	9	mobilizators,	mobiliser,
149	14	Id,	Dewali,
"	16	Dewali day.	Id.
159	29	or	of
160	24	mobilizators.	mobilisers.
161	3 & 11	mobilisator.	mobiliser.
171	13	Chairmen	Chairman
175	33	Special Service	Special Service Group
180	5	Lt. Sehna Singh	Lt. Lehna Singh
181	25	plied	supplied
187	21	had	were
191	14	certain proportion	portion
192	16	moulds	moth
195	9	headlights full	headlights full on
196	36	along	over
201	6	acting	working
205	13	<i>enen</i>	<i>enan</i>
"	"	<i>Maunu</i>	<i>Mainu</i>
206	3	Lt.-Col. Fujiwama,	Lt.-Col. Fujiwara,
209	19	who	which
213	25	which raised	raised
222	12	might	there might
224	33	themselves	ourselves
232	14	who	that
233	1	and	and another at
234	1	had admired	admired
"	31	this	the
237	25	advice	advices
238	36	force	forces
239	13	hold	to hold
241	11	materialised.	appeared.
242	2	granades	grenades
"	10	Military	Ministry
244	14	exchanged.	expressed.
245	5	dealing with	dealing of
247	8	single room	single-seated rooms

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
247	25	in Japan	Netaji and his staff left Japar
248	22	Everyone	All
249	4	by the end of November.	early in December.
„	7	whose east bank	the east bank of which
„	9	defence	defensive
250	24	continue with	continue
252	27	defence	defensive
259	5	hand	one hand
260	37	Then	Them
262	14	outfield	oil-field
„	21	generation	generations
„	28	your	our
264	33	he	the
266	6	communitied	comminuted
„	31	incidence.	incident.
„	37	refused go	refused to go
270	4	arrived	arrived at
273	26	the slightest	a single
276	21	going.	going on,
279	22	nominee,	nominees,
293	4	put by	put up by
295	31	Nation	National
297	2	informed	inspired
„	4	allow for	allow
298	17	sraddling	straddling
299	9	out	our
299	20	during day,	during the day,
300	24	far stronger	far too stronger
„	26	srength	strength
304	7	provisions	provision
„	19	give to	give
305	34	cut.	cut off.
308	13	aircraft	aircrafts
310	22	classical	classic
328	25	ICS	I. C. S.
329	5	secure	secured
„	15	plane in	way of
330	1	were behind	were inspired by

<i>Page</i>	<i>Line</i>	<i>Incorrect</i>	<i>Correct</i>
332	25	stands second to none	does not stand second to that
"	30	independent India.	Indian independence.
333	10	once contained	contained
"	22	contrast with	contrast to
334	6	the	their
"	9	should take up	would take to
335	32	the	he
"	34	must be	should have been
336	5	must fight	has to fight
337	23	work,	work, which I did
338	36	at the end	in the end
340	22	to consider	to find
341	10	largely	large
344	16	chivvied	chevied
"	30	sufficiently largely	sufficiently
"	36	bombardment	bombing
345	4, 12, 16	bombardment	bombing
346	12	great deal more	great deal
348	3	division.	decision.
349	12	that had been	had been
"	20	be forced in the circumstances	be forced
350	36	I thought that if	If
351	31	must have joined	must join

---





